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שם אחר

A NAME, an After-one;

OR,

Ὄνομα Καινὸν,

A NAME, a New One,

In the Later-Day-Glory:

OR, AN

Historical Declaration

OF THE

Life of Shem Acher,

Especially as to some more eminent Passages of his Day, relating to his more thorow lawful Call to the Office and Work of the Ministry, for about Twenty Years last past.

Wherein *PAUL* is propounded for an Example, and the Case, so far as it doth run Parallel, is set down before it; tho the Preheminence is given unto *Paul*, and the Glory of all ascribed in every part, and in the whole of it, unto *Jehovah Ælohim*, whose rich Grace, and free Love has been, in all this, unsearchably rich and exceedingly abundant.

Wherein are also several other weighty Cases, and great Questions stated and resolved, About the Right Administrator in perfecting a Believer's Baptism; About Receiving of a Member in some Cases out of one Church in the same City into another Church of the same City, in the Main of the same Gospel-Faith and Order: And about the sound Evidences of a State of Grace.

All submitted to Scripture-Counsel, Number, Measure and Weight; to Word-Rule-Trial-Judgment-and Determination. 1*Tim.*1.11,15,16,17.

LONDON, Printed for *John Lawrence*, at the Angel near the Royal Exchange in *Cornhill*, 1681.

A NAME, an Afterone;

OR

A NAME, a New One,

OR, AN

Hiſtorical Declaration

OF THE

Life of Elijah Ruby.

Eſpecially as to ſome more eminent Paſſages of his Day, relating to his more thorow lawful Call to the Office and Work of the Miniſtry, for about Twenty Years laſt paſt.

Wherein is propounded for an Example, and the Cafe, to bear as it doth run Parallel, is ſet down before it; who the Predeterminence is given unto Paul, and the Glory of all is ſcribed in every part, and in the whole of it, unto Jehovah Elohim, whole rich Grace, and free Love has been, in all this, unſearchably rich and exceedingly abounding.

LONDON: Printed for Tho. Parkhurſt at the Angel near the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, 1681.

AN Historical Declaration OF THE LIFE OF Shem Acher.

PAUL.

PAUL had * another Name, which was *Saul*: This other Name was an Hebrew Name, signifying, *Asked, Desired*, or *Petitioned*.

* Act. 13. 9. Gal. 1. 1. Acts 9. 1, 4, 8, 11, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26. and in many other places.

SHEM ACHER.

Shem Acher is an Hebrew Name, signifying an *After-Name*, or a Name an *After one*; to which he was directed by the LORD, in a suitable †Scripture, upon that new State, which he through Grace passed into.

† Isa. 65. 15.

PAUL.

*If outward Priviledges had had any thing in them to have bin boasted of, he had enough to say concerning that; For, he was by birth an *Israelite*, or *Jew*, *an Hebrew of the Hebrews*, both his Parents being such: which race of People had many Favours and Dignities conferred upon them by the LORD, beyond other Nations; He was of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, which was a Tribe signally honoured in many respects: He was educated in *Jerusalem* at the feet of *Gamaliel*, a Disciple and a Pupil under the teaching and tutorage of that Doctor of the Law, thus bred up in their School and College: He was instituted and instructed in *Pharisaism*, of which Sect and Way his Father and other Ancestors were; and thus was he trained up from his Youth, being very zealous for their Common-Prayer-Book and Church-Canons, and other human Traditions. And thus he continued till about the three or four or five and twentieth year of his Age, when in a false and blind Zeal he cruelly persecuted Christ, and the Church and Disciples of Christ, breathing out Threatnings and Slaughter against them; thinking verily with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*: which thing he also did in *Jerusalem*, and many of the Saints did he shut up in Prison, having received Authority from the chief Priests; and when they were put to death, he gave his voice against them. And he punished them often in the Synagogues, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even unto strange Cities.

* Phil. 3. 4, 5, 6. Act. 21. 39. & 22. 3. Rom. 11. 1. 2 Cor. 2. 22. Act. 24. 14. & 26. 6, 7. & 28. 17, 19, 20. Rom. 9. 3. & 11. 14. Act. 22. 3. Gal. 1. 14. Acts 23. 6. & 26. 5. & 7. 58. & 8. 1. & 9. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, 21, 26. & 22. 4, 5, 19, 20. & 26. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13, 23. 1 Tim. 1. 13. Mat. 23. 13.—33.

SHEM. ACHER.

He was deſcended from the Fathers and Mothers ſide of two Families of the greateſt Name and Note, ſome of them, in all *Devonſhire*; of one of them * *Cambden* in his *Britannia* doth record, that it is an Honourable and very Ancient Family; and of the other, *Guillam* in his *Diſplay of Herauldry*, mentioneth concerning one of that Name eſpecially, that his Merits do require, that, his Coat-Armour ſhould be expreſſed in that ſelected manner of Blazoning, which is fitting to Noble Perſonages, in reſpect of his noble Courage and high Attempts atchieved, whereby he merited to be reckoned, The Honour of our *Engliſh* Nation, and of Naval Profeſſion.

* P. 147. *Clara & perantiqua familia.*

Guillim's Diſplay of Heraldry, pag. 107.

He was born of Religious Parents, according to the meaſures of Light in that Age, who gave him up to the LORD for the Miniſterial Office and Work; and accordingly he had his Education in the Families of Profeſſors of Religion; His Heart was enclin'd to love Books, and to delight in Learning from a Child; and he doth not remember that ever he gave way ſo much as to any one approving thought of ſtepping into any other Calling: Anſwerably unto this, he was inſtructed by ſome of the ableſt Maſters of Grammar-Knowledg, and for ſome time was the higheſt of the Scholars in one of the moſt eminent Schools of all that County.

About the beginning of the ſeventeenth year of his Age he was ſent to the Univerſity of *Oxford*, to be skilled in the Arts and Sciences, in that corrupt unſcriptural way and manner as then it was, and ſtill is; there he took two Degrees, tho little advancement he made in ſuch Scripture-Learning, as ſince through Mercy he has experienced to be ſound and uſeful: There he remained till the three or four and twentieth year of his Age.

In this Time Univerſity-Wits had ſomewhat tainted and ſowred him with a bad Ferment, that he was ſomewhat ſwoln and prejudiced againſt the ſtrict Profeſſion of Religion amongſt the *Puritan* Party, (the Land being then moſtly divided into but Two Parties, *Puritan* and *Prophane*) though ſtill his Convictions, and the power of a Religious foregoing Education, ſecretly, held him in his retired ſerious conſiderate thoughts in ſome better liking with the way of a ſtrict holy Converſation even whilſt, rather than part with a witty Jeſt amongſt his *Ingenioſo's*, who were too much his Companions, he would have a fling at times at the *Nonconformiſts*; of whom he was no open Perſecutor, but gave vent unto ſome Corruptions of another kind; of which more towards the cloſe about the Evidences of Grace. During this time he held on in the Common-Prayer-Book track, even to the expoſing of his Life to open danger, when Souldiers came in upon him with Swords and Guns, whilſt he was at his ſuperſtitious Worſhip.

PAUL.

† He had a Miraculous Converſion; for, when he was in the heat of his Perſecuting the Saints, being injurious to the Chriſtian Churches, and a Blaſphemer of God, of Chriſt God-Man, and of his Truths, Worſhip, Cauſe, Ways, and Diſciples, ſuddenly there ſhined round about him a Light from Heaven; and he fell to the Earth, and heard a Voice ſaying unto him, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me? And he ſaid, Who art thou, LORD? And the LORD ſaid, I am JESUS whom thou perſecuteſt. It is hard for thee to kick againſt the Goads.* And he trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, *LORD, What wilt thou have me to do? And the LORD ſaid unto him, Ariſe, and go into the City, and it ſhall be told thee what thou muſt do.*

† Acts 9. 3, 4, 5, 6. & 22. 6, 7, 8. & 26. 13, &c. Gal. 1. 15, 16, 22, 23. Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. 1 Cor 2. 2, &c. 2 Cor. 5. 11, ---15.

The Hiſtory of this wonderful Work he is now ready to own, and to declare before Princes, Prieſts, or People, where he had a Call and Opportunity; preaching up that Chriſtian Doctrine and Diſcipleſhip, which but a little before he endeavoured to perſecute down; counting all his former ſelf-righteouſneſs, formal-worſhippings, creature-advantages, outward Church-priviledges, vain affectation of human wiſdom, by Philoſophic Studies, to be as dung, and as Dogs-meat, for the excellency of the Knowledg of Chriſt Jeſus his Lord, for whom he ſuffered the loſs of all things, that he might win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having his own righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, but, that which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith. And now he lays aſide

his

his old human Set-Forms, and prayed in the help of the interceding Spirit, framing of such arguing Requests within him as his present Case called for. Thus, he, who had been one of the prime of Sinners, is now become one of the greatest Exalters of the Father's rich Grace and free Love, of Christ's Alsufficient Satisfaction, and prevailing Intercession, and of the holy Spirit's powerful gracious working.

SHEM ACHER.

The way and manner of the holy Spirit's working upon him hath been various at several times, yet in a marvelous gracious manner; even from his Childhood, and in his Youth, oftentimes by Terror, now and then by Bands of Love. He lay for many years under a spirit of bondage to Fear, being very often frighted in terrible Dreams, wherein he fell into deep Waters, the Earth sliding away from under him, whilst he endeavoured to climb up to the top of an Hill or Rock for safety, which he was not able to do: falling over Bridges into the Sea, and down from thence into the Gulph and horrible Pit (though at that time he little understood that thus was the positure of the Creation as to the lowest World.) The Devil many times seemed to be at hand, running to lay hold on him, though always he escaped, yet so terrified as awakened him, and left cold sweats upon him: yet this kept him several years in aw, and held him back from many Sins. Once when he was tampering about one Sin, which was preparing for another Sin, though he did not then actually commit either the one or the other, a Voice with power smote his heart as with a Thunder-bolt from Heaven, *What if God should strike thee dead and damned upon the place?* which quickly sent him to his private Chamber, and set him about Praying, Reading, Confessing, Humbling work; and at other times he was put upon Fasting, thinking with himself to conquer Corruptions and Temptations, too much going forth in his own strength, and depending upon Duties; which yet Experience told him were all too weak in this Combat without help from Christ and his Spirit. At other seasons there were sweet Allurings, especially upon reading the History of Christ's Life, Sufferings and Death, which did very much melt him into Tears, and kindly affect, and winningly overcome the Heart.

Though he dare not say, as one Minister told him concerning himself, he was Αυτοπάτερ, A Self-Father, or, his own Spiritual Father; his meaning being, that he was his own Converter, begotten and born by that Word which he preached to others. If any would have *Shem* to name his Father, He, of and by whom he was born from Above, was *Abi-jah*, *Jah* my Father; *Abi Æl*, the mighty God, my Father: *Abi-hu*, He, and the Alone my Father He.

As *Shem* has been in the lowest World in his Spirit, in the Gulph, and somewhat in Hell; so also there have been two more remarkable passages at special seasons, when his Heart was taken into nearer union to, and closer fellowship with Christ in the uppermost World.

The one was, when solemnly and seriously setting himself to enquire into the safety of his Spiritual Estate, he was held strictly to these Terms, That he must burn his Papers with his own Hand, and his former Collections out of humane Authors of Philosophical Learning, wherein much of that which was corrupt was heaped together, amongst a little somewhat that was true and good: and that he must begin (as it it were) Religion, and all anew, and take all from Christ, and from his Word purely and only, with a Promise, That, then he should be better taught, and not lose any thing that was useful of what he knew before, and should have a better and richer stock given in. About which time it was clearly revealed to him, and in him, by a passage in an Author, who so opened that word, in 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. The whole Scripture which the English Translation doth render *All Scripture*, that for the whole and every part of his Religion, in all Doctrine and Duties, he must take the whole Scripture along with him, both Old and New Testament to be for him, where-ever the holy Spirit doth take occasion to treat of any such particular subject-matter; which Word-Rule in the harmoniousness and uniformness, or oneness of it throughout, has been of singular unexpressible usefulness to him ever since in this Age of growing Light. This put him to a kind of offering up his *Isaac*: But *Jehovah*, his *Ælohim* framed his Heart to it, and he readily answered the Call, and sacrificed with his own hand in the Flames several

years Labours, of great value in the esteem of some, (for he had still an industrious mind, trying many ways of heaping up Learning, but was not set right till now.) And from that day to this he has found the LORD True, and Good as his Word, so that he can say, to the praise of this God of all Grace and Mercy, That scarce one week for many years has passed over him without some special Teachings, the holy Spirit opening some Scripture or other before him, and then opening the Eyes of his Understanding to take in the light and meaning thereof, of which he has gathered much, and it is laid up by him as his rich Treasure in and under Christ: yea, it is a very black night and dark day with him, if there be any one such whole natural day in any one week, wherein there is not somewhat of this: All the Glory be to *Jehovah Ælohim.*

But, how now? what shall be done to carry on Preaching and Praying Work? (for, he was a Teacher of others, who much needed to have been instructed himself, though he had a great Name amongst Ministers and People:) The Forms of Prayer were gone, the Fire had turned them into Ashes. He had composed many of those Forms of his own, upon several Cases, with great variety; most Hearers could scarce discern it to be a Form of humane composure: but the LORD took him at his Word, and he must now trust to the assistance and inworking of the Spirit of Grace and of Supplication, who has not been thus far wanting when aright depended on.

About seventeen years since, when the *Act for Uniformity* came forth, and the Profession of *Assent and Consent*, and *Subscriptions* were required, the LORD soon stated the Case, and resolved the Question upon *Shem*'s Mind and Heart, not so much as to touch that unclean Constitution of humanely invented Worship, and so he has continued ever since, a total thorow *Nonconformist*, though Afflictions and Persecutions have abidden him from that time.

After this the LORD honoured him with somewhat of a Vision in the Spirit, wherein two of the choicest Revelations were made manifest to him and in him: For, in a very dark evening, whilst a Prisoner, a little before his going to his Lodging, he bowing his knees in Prayer, was on a sudden taken up in his Spirit as if he had been actually in Heaven, (This was about fourteen years ago, answering somewhat to that of *Paul* *) where he had a clear view of *Christ* in his Glorified Humanity by an Eye of Faith, He sitting in the sides of the † North; which was as real to him as if he had conversed with Christ personally in the flesh; and it is still so, when he is in a right worshiping Frame: being led to him as to the one Mediator and Advocate to carry on all his Affairs in the Court above. The other was, ‖ A Self-evidencing view of those Glorious Appearances of Father, Son, and holy Spirit, and distinctness of Communion with each of these in their several subsistences, shining forth in the Face of *Jesus*. This sight covered his Spirit with such a shining Light and bright Glory, that, their faces viewing him, was such an heavenly Manifestation of unveiled Aspects, as dwells with him to this hour, and is more or less in every solemn Duty of Instituted Worship, a guiding of his Spirit into that within the Veil, whither Jesus the Fore-runner is for him entred. And this has been revealed to him to be his being baptised with the holy Spirit, *Mat.*3.11. *Act.*1.5. & 11.16.

This Object raised him into an higher way of Later-Day-Glory-hymnifying, than his former way of singing by Mens Forms, read out of a Book, could reach unto. And thus it is through continuance of special Favour with him to this day, and will ever live with him; for, it espoused and somewhat married his whole Man, Body, Soul and Spirit, to each of these Three in One *Jehovah*, * as to his Husbands, Creators, and Makers; To the Father, as the Father; to the Son, as the Son; to the holy Spirit, as the holy Spirit; Makers, Husbands, Creators.

* 2 Cor. 12. 1,—4.
† Job 23. 3, 4, 8, 9. & 26. 6, 7. Psal. 48. 1, 2, 3. & 75. 6, 7. Isa. 14. 9,—15.
‖ 2 Cor. 13. 14 1 Joh. 1 3, 7. Mat. 28. 19. John *chap.* 14, 15, 16, & 17. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Ps. 11 7. *Their Faces*, or, *His Faces*. (*His*, or *their Aspects*. See *Ainsworth in loc.*) Numb. 12. 8. Heb. 6. 19, 20. & 10. 19,—22.

* Isa. 54. 5. Psa. 149. 2. Job 4. 17. & 35. 10. Eccles. 12. 1.

PAUL.

* He had such a Call to the Office and Work of the Ministry as was not common; for he was an Apostle by the Will of God, and not of Men, neither by Men, but by Jesus Christ; neither was the Gospel, which was preached, of this Servant of Christ, according to Man; for he neither received it of Man, neither was he taught but by the

* Act. 26. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 1. & 3. 7, 8. Act. 9. 15. Ro. 11. 13. 1 Tim. 2. 7. Gal. 1. 16, 17, 18.

the Revelation of Jesus Christ, who at that very time, when he so remarkably converted *Paul*, called him hereunto, saying to him, *Arise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, To make* (or ordain) *thee a Minister, and a Witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the People, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee: To open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God: That they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance amongst them who are sanctified by Faith, that is in me. Whereupon he was not disobedient unto the heavenly Vision, but shewed first unto them of* Damascus, *and at* Jerusalem, *and throughout all the Coasts of* Judea, *and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance.* This preaching Office he presently set about: *Immediatly he conferred not with Flesh and Blood, neither went he up to* Jerusalem, *to them that were Apostles before him, being* * *nothing inferior to the chief of the Apostles*, yet calleth himself the *least of the Apostles*, and an *Abortive*, and pronounceth himself unworthy to be said to be an Apostle, because he persecuted the Church of Christ. He was but a Minister, by whom many of the People believed; yet appointed of God for those great Ends, of bringing in of Sinners to Christ, and of building them up in Christ, that the LORD might have all the Glory, for *Paul* was not any thing in and of himself.

* 2 Cor. 11. 5. & 12 11. Eph. 3 8. 1 Cor. 15. 8, 9, 10. & 3. 5, 6, 7, 22.

The LORD wonderfully owning him, and blessing of his Labours, in such large-spreading and deep-rooted Conversions, in planting of New-Testament-Churches, and many other ways; false Apostles, and others, envying and opposing of him, do now call into *question his Call to the Ministerial Office and Work, whether it were lawful and right or not, because it was not some way as theirs was, which they would have imposed upon him, to which he could not submit.

* 1 Cor. 9. 1 2; 3. 2 Cor. 13. 3, 4, 5.

This puts him upon making of an † Apology, to defend and magnify his Office, wherein if he were a Fool in glorying, if any so thought or judged him, it was chargeable on those who so compelled him thereunto, that the Minds of young Converts might not be troubled, nor the Work of the Gospel other ways hindred.

† 1 Cor. 9. 3.

Those Arguments which, among others, he doth urge for the Proof of the Lawfulness of his Call, were drawn from his being * separated thereunto from his Mother's Womb.

He was eminently gifted by the Holy Spirit for this Office.

He was much Graced by the same Holy Spirit for this Function.

† He had a special Call thereunto by Christ himself.

‖ He had such a Sight of Christ, and such a Voice from Christ, relating to this, as was extraordinary.

* He had sealing Testimonies from Heaven, in the Hearts of Multitudes, of his Ministerial Call.

† He had a Miracle-working Power communicated to him, for a further Confirmation of the Lawfulness of his Call, and Truth of his Doctrine.

* Gal. 1. 15, 16. So was *Jeremiah*, ch. 1. 5. So was *John* the *Baptist*, Luk. 1. 15, 16 So Christ, and so *Isaiah*, chap. 49. v 1, 5.

† See before, *pag.* 6.

‖ 1 Cor. 9. 1.

* 2 Cor. 13. 3, 4, 5. 1 Cor. 9. 1 2.

† Acts 14. 1, 2 3.

SHEM ACHER.

His Call to this Office and Work of the Ministry, having somewhat in it which is outward, common, and ordinary, referring unto Men; and somewhat which is inward, special, and more than ordinary, relating unto God: it may therefore have some good Use, and profitable Tendency, to speak distinctly unto each.

That of it which refers unto Men is this: Let any almost plead and urge what they will or can, as to this, he has somewhat or other to say for the stopping of their Mouths; and all of it put together, is at least more than he knows of any one Man, who justifies his Call from Men, can say for himself. Tho *Shem Acher* doth mainly and ultimately resolve the Warrantableness and Rightfulness of his Call into somewhat else, as you will hear quickly, when his Case shall be compared with *Paul*'s, in several Particulars, as to the Ministerial Office, wherein yet he doth give the Preheminence unto *Paul*; and this not only as to the degrees and measures, which were higher and larger, but also as to one or more of the kinds; particularly, as to *Paul*'s God-inspiredness, and Infallibility, in being the Holy Spirit's

Penman of much of the Holy Scriptures, and ſomewhat elſe, which was then peculiar to his Apoſtolical Office, and Miracle-working Power.

If thoſe who do place the Authority and Power in the Magiſtrate, to give a Call to the Miniſterial Office, ſhould queſtion *Shem Acher*'s Call, he has by him to ſhew it under the Atteſts, the Hands and Seals of two Kings, and of one Protector; tho as to this laſt, and one of the other, they were other Men, who voluntarily of themſelves procured this for him, without his ſeeking.

If thoſe who lodg this in Epiſcopal Juriſdiction, call upon him to give them ſome account of his Miniſterial Function, urging for a Succeſſion of lawfully called Miniſters, ordained Ones, (beſides the extraordinary Prophets) Such were the First-born of Families, from *Adam*'s time to *Moſes*, *Exod.*19. 22,24. & 24.5. *Numb.* 8. 5,——22. In *Moſes*'s Days it paſſed from the Firſt born unto *Aaron* and his Sons, and unto the Tribe of *Levi*, *Exod.* chap. 28, 29. *Mal.* 2. 4, —— 10. Thus it continued all the Old Teſtament through. After the Jews return from the Babyloniſh Captivity, the Reformers ſought for the Sons of the Prieſts in the Regiſter, ſuch as were reckoned by Genealogy; thoſe who were not found ſuch, as polluted, were put from the Prieſthood, *Ezra* 2. 61, 62, 63: In the New Teſtament, there was *John* the Son of a Prieſt, honoured by the Prophecies of *Iſaiah* and *Malachy*; Chriſt ordained twelve Apoſtles, and ſeventy Diſciples, and called *Paul* to the Office and Work of the Miniſtry; and they from Chriſt ordained others. As to this, *Shem Acher* has to ſay, that he has it to ſhew under the Hands and Seals of Biſhop *Hall*, for Deaconſhip, and for laying on of Hands, (who putting him to the queſtion, Whether he was perſuaded in his Heart, that the Holy Spirit called him to that Office? he anſwered, That he was ſo perſuaded) and of Biſhop *Skinner*, for the Miniſtry.

If ſuch as are for Ordination by a Claſſical Presbytery, (I meddle not here with that Controverſy, Whether a Biſhop and a Presbyter be both but one and the ſame Officer?) object againſt his Commiſſion, and if they ſhould take in Independent, or Congregational Miniſters to join with them in the ſame Charge, he can return this, That he has the Approbation of a Dean, and of Canons, of Aſſociated Miniſters, both Presbyterian and Independent; alſo of Tryers in the Protector's Time, who were appointed for the examining, and the ſending forth of able fit Men to preach the Goſpel, and to take upon them the Care and Charge of Souls, tho he never was before them, neither did he apply himſelf unto them for ſuch an end, either by himſelf, or by others.

If ſuch as do ſeat this in the Peoples Choice and Call, do reaſon the Caſe with him about it, that it muſt be received from them, as if the Power were originally there, he has much to offer unto ſuch to be conſidered by them. The People of that Pariſh where he lived before, refuſing to ſubmit to Church-Diſcipline, when, his Heart being ſet upon Reforming, according to what knowledg he then had, he propounded it to them; (for at that time he kept up a Meeting moſt Evenings, for ſome time, to ſpeak to ſome practical Caſe of Conſcience, and had written diverſe little Books of Diaries of his own Experiences.) They thus rejecting to be governed by the Laws of Chriſt's Houſe, hereupon Providence gave him as large, full, and clear a Call to one of the moſt populous Towns in all *Dorſetſhire*, by ſome Thouſands of that Town, and by Multitudes of other neighbouring Places thereabouts, as any Miniſter in *England*, that he knows of, had in that Day. And after about two Years waiting by them, and referring the Caſe of Removal to them, into the Arbitration and Judgment of ſome Presbyterian Miniſters of other Counties, beſides the Encouragement of other Miniſters of the ſame County, both Presbyterian and Independent, who exhorted to, and approved of ſuch a Removal; he had as ſolemn an *Entrance into the taking charge of the People of that Town, as any Paſtor that he has heard of in that Age: For, beſides what hath been already mentioned, there was one ſolemn Day of Faſting kept publickly there, carried on by Presbyterians and others, in a great Aſſembly, to prepare that People, and to direct them in their Choice, where he was preſent, yet did not at that time, either as a Mouth from God in Preaching, or as a Mouth to God in Praying, openly appear. And afterwards, at another ſolemn Faſt there, on the Day of his Reception, when the Publick Work and Worſhip of that Day was performed by one

*1 Theſſ. 2. 18, 19, 20. This Scripture was the Subject Matter of his firſt Sermon at his Entrance there.

one Presbyterian Minister, and another Independant Minister, which was closed up by *Shem Acher* himself, and all to such satisfaction and with such rejoycing, of about two thousand or more present, as that the Memory thereof, he supposeth, is still kept alive in the Hearts of some hundreds of them.

After this, about five years and half after, he being honoured with an Imprisonment for Christ's sake, for the Gospel sake, for Righteousnes sake, for the Elect's sake, he gathered a Church there in that place of Confinement, towards the end of which Imprisonment, upon a solemn Fasting day, so far as their light in those matters did attain, the Brethren and Sisters then present thankfully owned their profiting under his ministerial Labours, and gave a large Testimony to his ministerial Office and Work; only this must be remembred, that, at several times upon several occasions, he in the hearing of several of them, did always reserve to himself the liberty of answering of Christ's Call to any other Place or People; for, he was the LORD's, having given up himself unto Him, to be wholy and only at his dispose, and not to be during Life staked down to any particular Place or People.

Once more, since his coming to *London*, he has been gathering of another People; and that Church with whom he now walks, did all such of them as were then actually in Fellowship, upon a Solemn-Fast-assembling, communicate their Experiences to one another, how much the LORD had blessed his Labours upon their Hearts, and towards the close of the work of that day, (not by Imposition of Hands, or Ordination to the ministerial Office, or any thing of that Nature, which was openly so declared both by him and them.) One of them in the Name of the rest, in Prayer to the LORD, did by stretching out of his Hands, as others also of them did, commend him unto the LORD in a special Message to the Sabbath Churches in *Wiltshire*, *Hampshire*, *Dorcetshire*, *Glocestershire*, and *Berkshire*, which was undertaken by him, and prospered with desired Succes, the report whereof at his return, caused Joy to all the Brethren and Sisters in Fellowship.

This is somewhat of that, which he here brings in as an Argument unto Men, who are urgent for such outward, common, ordinary, Calls to this Office from Men.

This was a choice piece of the Beauty of this Providence in this his age of growing-Light: For, let any one convinced of the Seventh-day-Sabbath, have been of what Judgment soever, yet still there had been a Receiver of him into Church-Fellowship, whatsoever his Principle had been.

If after all this, it be more deeply researched into, and he be close and home put to it, what he himself doth mainly and ultimately resolve his inward, special, more than ordinary Call into as to the ministerial Office and Work; he desireth, that, so far as the Case will run Parallel with *Paul*'s, (though he here, as before, gives the preheminence to *Paul*) it may be in a Brotherly manner and Christian way admitted and received.

He was set apart to this Office, from his Mother's Womb: For, his Father and Mother related to him, when he grew up to some capacity for the taking of this in, that, (if not whilst he was in the Womb, in case he should prove a Male perfect Child, yet at least) upon his being born a Male Child with perfection of Limbs and of Parts, by Vow or some religious Promise made to God, they would give him up unto the LORD, to whom they dedicated him for the Office and Work of the Ministry, which has since been suggested to him by the Holy Spirit, and confirmed by many Experiences according to the Word, which he doth embrace with a thankful joyful Heart, as a more than common Favour from that good Spirit. His Parents, as they had thus designed him to this special Course and honourable Calling; so accordingly, they were at the care and cost to train and breed him up in such Knowledg and Learning, as the Principles and Attainments of that Age and Day directed them to. As he grew up, his strong Propensions, and continued Inclinations were for this Calling, as the only proper course of his Life intended for him; tho by invitation thereunto by his Father, and from others he has since discerned; that, he entered upon somewhat of it too soon and too unfurnished; for the longer he doth live, and the more spiritual discerning he hath, still the more he sees and feels of his * Insufficiency for so high, honourable, and great undertaking, and would gladly sit at the Feet of others, every way more accomplished, and more † clothed

* 2 Cor. 2. 16, 17.

† 2 Chron. 24. 20. *Margin.*

 with

with the Holy Spirit for it; and he is grieved at Heart, and afflicted in Spirit, to behold the over forwardneſs of ſo many in the preſent Age, who undertake to be publick Teachers of others, when divers of them do need to be catechizingly-taught themſelves.

Since his more thorow paſſing into this Office, the Holy Spirit, who doth divide his Gifts to every Man ſeverally as he will, hath in ſome meaſure* Gifted him for it: (which he would ſpeak thankfully, as acknowledging it to be meer Grace and ſpecial Favour; for, he aſcribes nothing of the Spiritualſity of it to his own former Philoſophick Studies or ſelf Acquirements or human Inſtructing, but, it was divine Teaching, and Gifted infuſing from Heaven: ſo withal, humbly with ſelf-abaſing, that, all this while he has made no further progreſs in a Fittedneſs and Ability for this Calling in the proper peculiar Endowments for it: though this he can ſay through Grace; that, for theſe laſt ſeventeen years, more eſpecially for the laſt fourteen years, he has had in the Strength and Supplies of the Holy Spirit, an induſtrious mind to trade with his Talent received; and there is ſeldom a day, wherein ſomewhat more is not, according to the † Promiſe given unto him: and he remembers well, that, for about ſeventeen Years ago, though he had ſome knowledg of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Tongues before, yet this Meditation taking ſenſible hold of his Heart, that, when he went thorow the Bible, and examined the Gifts of Miniſters there, he could not find any one Miniſter of Chriſt lawfully called by him to that Office, who did not underſtand the Words of *Jehovah Ælohim* in their Original Language; that which did ſo quicken him up to pray for, and to endeavour after a more growing Skilfulneſs, eſpecially in the inner knowledg of the *Hebrew* Significations by the Holy Spirits Teachings, that, the ſerious Thoughts of, and unexpreſſible Advantages by, this Scripture Learning, do abide with him to this Day: and he doth judg it very requiſite for thoſe who concern themſelves in this Calling, to lay this more to Heart; had not the Holy Spirit ſomewhat Gifted him for this employ, he ſhould ſtill fear and doubt, he had never called him to it.

The ſame Holy Spirit has in a meaſure Graced and Sanctifyed him for this Holy Function. This alſo as before concerning Gifts, he doth write with the ſame thankful humble Acknowledgments. It is not every one, who doth pretend and pride himſelf as Gifted, yea ſuppoſe him to have great common edifying Gifts, who is thereby preſently commiſſioned by Chriſt for the Miniſterial Office; ſeeing ſome ſuch are notoriouſly ſcandalous Livers, bitter Perſecuters of the Saints, open declared Enemies againſt the Power and Purity of right Worſhip, and of other true good Religion, againſt which they ſharpen and ſet the edg of thoſe Weapons of Knowledg which they have: who, whilſt ſuch are ſo far from being to be admitted Adminiſtrators of Church-Ordinances, that, they ought not to be admitted to, or continued in, a ſtate of Church-Memberſhip, but ſhould by the due regular exerciſe of Church Diſcipline, be ſhut or thruſt out from ſuch Communion. And here, when he duly conſiders, and ſeriouſly ponders, ‖ what Men of God, what chief Men among the People, how holy, how unblemiſhed, how unblameable, how ſober and vigilent, how temperate, how moderate, how ſound minded, how wiſely circumſpect, how modeſt, how well behavoured, how fitly attired and well adorned, how hoſpitaliſh and harbourous in a courteous receiving and entertaining of Strangers, how apt, able, fit, appoſite to teach, well-habited and diſpoſed for orderly-clear-convincing-teaching; endued with a good Faculty of inſtructing and and of diſcipling of others, how not given to Wine-bibbing, or to Exceſs in any other Strong Drink which makes Drunk, not an Ale-ſtake, or common Tipler, not one that loves toſſing of Cups; not a ſtriker, ſmiter, or beater of others, not one of ungoverned heat, or of military Fierceneſs, not filthily-gaining, not coveteouſly intent upon diſhoneſt baſe gain; how equal, full of Equity in all things; how courteous, gentle, patient, how unbrawling either as to Speeches or Actions, declining the offered occaſions of ſinful contendings: no lover of Silver nor Idolizer of Money: how well governing his own Family, Houſhold; having his Children (if the LORD give him any) in Subjection, under Diſcipline, in good order; faithful Children, not refractory, not obnoxious to the Sin of Luxury: not one who is but newly ingraffed or implanted in Chriſtian Profeſſion in God's Houſe, ſuch as ought to have a good Teſtimony from thoſe that are withour, ſuch a one

* Pſ 68.11.18. Eph. 4 7,8,9, 10,11,12,13.

† Mat. 25. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 10. Rom. 12. 3, 6. 1 Cor. 12. 3,-11. Luke 19 12,-- 26. 1 Cor. 7. 17.

‖ 2 Tim. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 6. 11. 1 Sam. 9. 6, 7. Lev. 21. *throughout.* Ezek. 44. *throughout.* 1 Tim. 3. *throughout.* Tit. 1. 5, —9. Rev. 1, 2, 3. *chap.* 1 Pet. 5. 1,--4. Tit. 2. 1. Acts 6. 2, --4.

as cannot juſtly be called into queſtion, or into Court for any manifeſt Crime: what a Diſpenſer of God, as his Steward; not pertinaciouſly pleaſing of himſelf: not prone to anger, not haſty, not ſpirited for rage: what a lover of goodneſs, of good, both Men, Truths, and Things: how Juſt, how Holy, how Pious, how Continent: how firmly adhering to that faithful Word which is according to wholeſom Doctrine, that ſo he may be able alſo to exhort in Doctrine, ſuch as is healthful and ſound, and to convince ſuch who are contradicting and gainſaying ones; not attending to Jewiſh Fables, or to Precepts of Men averſe from the Truth, or turning Truth away, or turning from the Truth, one ſpeaking thoſe things, which do become ſound Doctrine; a Feeder of the Flock of God where he is: a carefully-watchfully-overſeeing one, not forcedly, but willingly, freely, with a prompt or ready Mind; not imperiouſly domineering or lording it over thoſe allotted to his Care and Charge: being Exemplary to the Flock; one, who believeth and prepareth for the Appearing of the chief Paſtor, to receive and carry away an unfading Crown of Glory: one, who gives himſelf to Prayer, and to the Word; whoſe Wife muſt be one who is honeſt, who proves conſtant, no Calumniatrix, not a deviliſh Slanderer, or falſe-Accuſer, no malicious Detracter, one ſober, faithful in All: what a Star, what an Angel! When theſe Qualifications, and many more that might be added, are brought and put together, to meaſure, as by a ſtraight Rule, many of thoſe by, who lay claim to this Office, that doth put *Shem Acher* upon deep Sighing, and makes him ask this Queſtion in his Thoughts, Where do the able faithful Miniſters dwell?

He has had ſome ſignal Calls to this Office by Chriſt, eſpecially at three times, one about fourteen years ago, another about ſeventeen years ſince, of both which an account has been given before for ſome other purpoſe, and once before both theſe, when with the former of theſe laſt two he did ſet himſelf, by Faſting and Prayer, to know the Mind of Chriſt, whether he had indeed ſet him apart to this Office: in all which times he had ſatisfying Anſwers, and Signs fulfilled quickly after in ſome remarkable returns by eminent Converſions.

He has had ſuch a ſight of Chriſt in the North, as was clear and evident to his Eye of Faith, chiefly more at one Seaſon, mentioned before, which was made ſo real to him, and has more or leſs ſo continued for ſo many years Night and Day, as doth leave it out of doubt with him, in a degree, as if he converſed with the Perſon of Chriſt himſelf, ſo far as *Shem Acher* in this ſtate of Imperfection, has a Capacity of walking with an exalted Chriſt in his ſtate of Glory.

As for the Sealings on Earth, of his Commiſſion received from Heaven, in the Hearts of converted Sinners, of edifyed Saints, of comforted Souls, he had rather, others would ſpeak and declare than himſelf; however ſeeing ſomewhat may be expected from him, as to this Parrallel, he doth * give thanks unto God, who eſpecially for twenty years or more, has cauſed him to triumph in Chriſt, and has made manifeſt the ſavour of his Knowledg by him, more or leſs in every place, as he has travelled up and down with the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt. For, (beſides ſome ownings of him and of his labours before whilſt he lived in a little Pariſh) when he was called to that Neighbour Town ſpoken of before, there was as hopeful a budding and blowing of young ones there and in the Neighbourhood, and he hopes much good brought forth to the praiſe of Grace in and by many; there being yet alive ſeveral ſcores who can, as he ſuppoſeth, ſomewhat ſenſibly call to mind the Truth of this: beſides what the LORD hath done by him in two Counties during his Impriſonments for above nine years, at which time ſome were begotten again in the bonds of the Goſpel; and alſo what good and gracious effects his preaching of the Goſpel has brought forth, by the Spirit and Bleſſing of God upon his Works ſince his Liberty, in any other place, particularly near and in *London*; For, † what is his Hope or Joy or Crown of rejoycing? are not even a converted, edifyed, comforted, confirmed People in the Preſence of our LORD Jeſus Chriſt at his coming? For, theſe are his Glory and Joy.

* 2 Cor. 2. 14. —17.

† 1 Theſſ. 2. 19, 20.

As for a Miracle-working Power, ſuch as *Paul* had, he doth not pretend to this, either for all the Kinds, or for thoſe high Degrees, and great Meaſures, as *Paul* was honoured withal: yet this he can ſay in Truth to the Glory of *Jehovah*, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that his *Ælohim* hath done wonderful things

for

for and upon him, and marvellous Works by him for and upon others, as to healing Cures both upon Spirit, Soul, and Body, and alſo as to the executing of very ſore threatned Judgments againſt and upon divers of his implacable Adverſaries: whereof there be Witneſſes, as to what was open and publick: the particulars whereof would make this Narrative too long: only one Experience he ſhall impart, which was a great ſecret of the LORD Chriſt's uſing him as his Adminiſtrator upon himſelf. Having, by much labour in his work in the forementioned Town about twenty years ſince, broken his Strength, which cauſed a Rupture, he uſed ſuch means for a Cure, as the moſt skilful Phyſician, and ſome others moſt experienced in ſuch caſes could help him to, all which proved ineffectual; whereupon his Thoughts were inwardly at work, upon this Enquiry, whether there were not ſome other way for his Cure to be ſought after? This was brought upon his Heart, that, * the Ordinance of Anointing the Sick had not been uſed: he was convinced of the need and uſe of this Ordinance, of the ſtanding preceptive and promiſing part of it; but, knew not whither to his ſatisfaction to go, or ſend for a right Adminiſtrator, the Miniſters generally in thoſe parts at that time, either not having Light or Faith therein, and ſome of them openly oppoſing of it: hereupon a ſecret Voice whiſpers, that, as a Meſſenger from Chriſt, he ſhould adminiſter it upon himſelf, the caſe being ſo circumſtanced; which accordingly he did, and felt the healing ſtrengthning Effect of it quickly: which has continued for many years, ſo that, he knows not, but, that † Sanative Virtue having been drawn down from Chriſt, by a touching of him, by the Hand of Faith, in a way of believing on him and on his Word, he is well healed; though ſtill under and for Chriſt he uſe apt means for the continuance of this great Mercy in order to Service: all the praiſe be to him for his Mercy, and for his Truth.

* Jam. 5.

† Joh. 3. 25, 26, 27.

So that what *John* the Baptiſt ſaid in the ſame caſe, both as to his Baptiſm and Miniſtry, *A Man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven*, *Shem Aober* doth apply to his own Caſe, who hath not in this Matter, ſo far as the Reſemblance here doth anſwer, taken what is lawful and good, but what has been given unto him thus from above. In the *Hypotheſis* or Suppoſition, that one ſpecial Argument or Matter upon which *John* was then diſputing, thoſe Words are referred to what went immediatly before, relating to the Miniſterial Office of Chriſt, or of *John*, or of both, as to Teaching and Baptizing: Both *John* the Miniſter, and Chriſt the Maſter, having received Gifts, Graces, and a Call from Heaven to exerciſe this honourable Function, or delegated Employment; they both having been owned and dignified with a Divine Teſtification from above, which gave and confirmed them in their lawful Authority ſo to act, (*Mat.* 21. 25. *John* 1. 23. & 3. 11, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33.) Theſe right Words, altho more generally laid down, have great force of ſtrong Reaſon, and of convincing Argument in them, to prove, That a Man can receive nothing, take nothing to himſelf, as to ſuch a Call and Office, and the Execution thereof, in a regular way, and right manner, by due Commiſſion, and warranting Authority, except it were firſt given him from Heaven: For tho legitimately to give, and legitimately to receive, are related to each other, and ſo are together at once; yet in order, to give is firſt: And therefore tho the Verb be in the Preſent Tenſe, δύναται 3 *Sing. Præſ. Subj.* yet the Participle is in the paſt Time, δεδομένον, *Partic. Nut. Præt. Paſſ. Not any*, no Man of right good Conſcience, *Heb.* 5. 4. is to take this Honour to himſelf, but he who is called of God, ordained and appointed thereunto by his Word-Warrant, (*Numb.* 16. 10. 1 *King.* 13. 33. *Luke* 3. 2. *Acts* 23. 5.) *Not any taketh:* As to the matter of Right none can juſtly take, none ought to take; tho many as to matter of Fact have taken, and do take, without Gift from *Jehovah Ælohim*, the great Lord over all. It being a Function of Divine Inſtitution, and of ſpecial Favour, of great Honour, and of weighty Charge, both ordinary and extraordinary Miniſters muſt be able to prove their Call, *Heb.* 5. 4. & 3. 2. *Jer* 17. 16. *Amos* 7. 15. *Rom.* 1. 1. 1 *Pet.* 1. 1. 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. *Epheſ.* 4. 11. *Exod.* 28. 1. 2 *Chron.* 13. 9, 10. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28, 29. 1 *Sam.* 23. Where any have upon their own Heads ſet themſelves a running, or have been puſhed forwards by others, whom the Lord never ſent, it concerns them to conſider how they will anſwer it.

And

And this is one Ground and Reason for this present * Apology, which is an Answer with a Defence as to Men's false chargings, † wherein he can justify himself and plead his Office in their Day and Court, though in some particular Circumstances of his Case, the Searcher of Hearts, and the Tryer of Reins, can find matter enough against him for which to condemn him: O how much Wisdom and Love has the righteous Judg manifested towards *Shem Acher*, in that he has found out a way, wherein to justify him from that wherein he can and doth comdemn himself?

* 1 Cor. 9. 3.
† 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

He has patiently born the secret Artifices, and open Attempts of some to defame him and to decry his Ministry for about these six years last past, as being made willing to deny himself, to take up his Cross dayly, and so to follow Christ: but having long observed, that such do still trouble the minds of divers, who have been hopefully coming on, and do lay stumbling-blocks in the way for the hinderance of others, whereby Gospel-work has been at a stand, the Sabbath Cause wronged, many Souls prejudiced, and the Honour of our LORD at least darkned, to say no more, he doth now judg it high time (having had several louder Calls thereunto of late) to do publick and open right to this Cause (and to some other after Causes and Cases) where others have done it such publick and open wrong, which is but an act of warrantable regular love towards himself and towards others: and also an act of due Equity, and of distributive Justice, for the wiping off of unkind Calumnies and injurious Aspersions imputed and cast upon an honourable Office; about which he hath been many and many a time * prejudged and condemned (as also in other cases) before his Matters of Fact and of Right have been known, or he himself heard; thus has his silence in this cause been misinterpreted a confession of Guilt. If any ask, why this had not been brought forth sooner, he has much to say in answer, if he would enlarge: but in short, some hints he has already given which carry forcibleness of right Words in them, to the impartially intelligent and spiritually discerning; and he hoped, that, the Experiences of many in this City, upon whose Hearts the LORD had sealed to the Office of his Ministry, might have put some timely stop to the further spreading of such defameings. Besides, it is evident to him, being led far into the mystery and meaning of this Providence; that, this is the fittest season for the making of the present Apology: and, if, either some will charge him with Vanity and Pride, with Folly and Vain-boasting, in writing so much upon his own Defence, or, if it have another effect than many are well aware off, for the putting of separate Churches upon a further search into the Scriptures of Truth, about the right constituting of Churches, the lawful Call to the Ministerial Office and Work, and some other weighty Ordinances, spoken unto in this Paper, it will much concern those, who make the exception duly to ponder, who is chargeable, Whether the Apologist, who in a Cause and Case so circumstanced doth make his honest Defence and just Plea? or, those unfriendly ones, who have compelled him hereunto? which advocating for Innocence, so far as it is Innocence, has Scripture-Warrant † both in the Old and New Testament; so that, if he have been a Fool in glorying, they are others who have necessitated him thereunto.

* Prov. 18. 13.

† Joh. 29. and 31. Chap. and elsewhere in that Book. Acts 22. and 26. chap. 1 Cor. 4. 1, --5. and 2 Cor. 11. throughout, and 12. 11.

PAUL.

* He was baptized upon this eminent Conversion, and clear Call to the Office and Work of the Ministry.

* Acts 19. 18. and 22. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 13. --17.

He being sent more to Preach the Gospel, than to Baptize, though this were in his Commission too. They were not very many whom he did Baptize, lest any should misjudge that he had baptized in his own Name, which he doth expresly deny and disown. He is called upon not to tarry, but to arise, and baptising to be baptized, and wash away his Sins, calling on the Name of the Lord; whereupon he doth submit to this Baptismal Ordinance.

SHEM ACHER.

He having had such Calls, and such clearings up of this Call, to this Ministerial Office, of which so large an Account has been given, especially at those solemn

Seasons of Fasting and Prayer, when he set himself more in serious earnest to be satisfied concerning this his Call from Heaven, by the Holy Spirits leaving some sealing Testimony thereof upon his Heart, according to the Word, at such a needful time, when he was under some perplexing Doubts and distressing Fears, about this Call. Being thus prepared for it, as is already rehearsed, the Light of (amongst some others) two Truths and Duties of this Age were evidently made known unto him, the one of the Seventh-day weekly Sabbath, the other of perfecting Believers Baptism (he doth leave others here, whose Case at present is, or hereafter may be more concerned in this Matter, if it be not already perfected upon and in them, to consider, whether then, if there be otherways a fittedness for, and a Call to, the Ministerial Function, it may not be proper and useful to enter upon this Office with such * perfecting of Baptism now they are grown Believers? so were the Priests under the Old Testament, (which is mentioned not at all to reinforce any Old Testament-Shadow, Figure, Type, or Ceremony, now under the present New Testament Administration of Grace) so was Christ; so were his Apostles: so was *Paul*, let the Spirit of God from his Word speak with Men's Hearts about this. I forbear in this place, to add any further Arguments for, or Advantages by, this.)

* Heb. 6. 1, 2. Mat. 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. and 4. 1.—17. Act. 9. 18, 20. and 26 16.-20. Exod. 29. 4. Lev. 8. 6.

The occasion of his passing into the Scripture-Path, of the weekly seventh-day-Sabbath was this: A near and dear Brother, and Friend of his from the Country, wrote this Case of Conscience to him; whether, the first day of the Week, as commonly observed by almost all Christians, or the seventh, which is the last day of every Week, in the weekly returns of it, were indeed the weekly Sabbath, according to God's Command? or in words to the same effect, for it is now about sixteen years since; and he earnestly desired the Opinion and Judgment of *Shem Acher* upon this Case. Upon the Receipt of this Letter, he was somewhat startled at this new Proposal, though he was not so fully satisfied for some years before about any word-Institution, for observing the first day (as a Sister in Sabbath-Fellowship, converted under his Ministry, a shining Ornament to her holy Profession, whilst here below, but now above with the LORD, informed and reminded him, that, when she propounded the very same Case to him about six or seven years before, he gave her a very faint unsatisfactory answer, as if he scarce were then a cordial Favourer of that first day; for, tho he preached up Sabbath-Duties and Priviledges in that Town, yet his Assistant was, as one part of his Work, to engage in the Controversy, which was the limitted day.) At the first receipt of that Case, he was full of other work and employ, about his own and other Cases, and laid it aside for near a Month; the Brother whose Spirit was tender in this Case, as in many other new Cases, sent a second Letter, with renewed importunity, requiring and expecting a speedy Answer; Upon this, *Shem Acher* speaks to *Jehovah Ælohim*, to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to Christ God-Man, in Prayer about it, and then makes Scripture-Testimonies to be † the Men of his Counsel: and being under an Obligation to take the whole Scripture along with him, for the resolving and determining of this Case, and to lay aside all his former Apprehensions, and no longer to parle with Humane Traditions, Philosophical arguings, Carnal reasonings, or any other unscriptural Authorities, he took his Bible, which he has now had about forty years, and to which he was well used, and so could with the more readiness turn unto apt places, beginning with the first Week of the created World, and there he found that, * the weekly Seventh-day-Sabbath had Foundation, both in *Jehovah*'s Word, and in Created Nature, as being the only day of the whole Week, on which the Creator and Redeemer rested, which day he Blessed, and which day he Sanctifyed, for Sabbath-Purposes and Priviledges, and not any other Day of the Week, neither first, second, third, fourth, fifth, nor sixth, but only the seventh. On he goes with his enquiry through the whole Book of *Moses*, and finds the seventh day Sabbath † reinforced, and the neglect and profaneing thereof reproved, before the solemn proclaiming of it at Mount *Sinai*; where the very next step in his Travails he hears * the trumpeting promulgation of this Kingly Law of the Seventh day Sabbath, sounding loud in his Ear and Heart: and still, the further he passed on in the after Writings of *Moses*, and of the Prophets, the more he is led along in the Seventh-day-Sabbath-way, till he came full home to the close of the Old Testament, with this Seal put upon this Scripture-Canon or Rule by *Jehovah* himself, † *Remember ye the Law*

† Psal. 119. 24.

* Gen. 2. 1, 2, 3.

† Exod. 16. 22.—30.

* Exod. 19, and 20 *chap. particularly chap.* 20. *vers.* 8, 9, 10, 11.

† Mal 4. 4.

Law of Moſes, my Servant, all and every, both of the Commands for keeping holy of the weekly Sabbath day, and of the Promiſes of Bleſſings and Sanctifyings of weekly Sabbath day to right Obſervers of it, and alſo of the Threatnings denounced againſt Profaners of the weekly-Sabbath-day, relating only to the ſeventh, the laſt day of every week, and to no other day of the week. He was now in a ſhort ſpace of time, the very ſame day of entering upon this enquiry, got ſo far forwards in this way, of the ſeventh-day Sabbath from that Light and Truth which *Jehovah Ælohim* ſent forth from his word by his Holy Spirit, that, he forthwith concluded, there was no either going back, or ſtepping aſide, for him out of this Scripture-Path: For, if all the Old Teſtament were for it, the New was not againſt it, ſeeing if any had preached up the firſt, or any other day, except the ſeventh, of the whole week, at the beginning of the New Teſtament-diſpenſation of Grace, thoſe who were more * noble-raced Believers on, and Diſciples of Chriſt, before the Writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, who ſearched the Scriptures they then had, whether the firſt-day-pretended-Sabbath-Doctrine were true or not, they could not find that written Word, which they then enjoyed, had any ſuch Inſtitution at all in it, but, the weekly Sabbath's † crowning honour was all through viſible and legible upon the head of the ſeventh day only. However he narrowly examined, and diligently compared the whole New Teſtament Writings by the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles: and there he ſoon diſcovered, that, the LORD Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe * Example he was to follow in all the Acts of Decalogical Obedience, or Obedience to the Laws of the ten Words, and whoſe exact perfect Holineſs and Righteouſneſs both of Nature, Heart, and Life was fully every way anſwering to all the demands of this Law, which was to be both imputed to Believers for their Juſtification, and conformed to by Believers in their Sanctification; this Chriſt all his Life long, in the weekly returns of the Sabbath, kept the † ſeventh day Sabbath, and no other day of the week as ſuch, to which the Goſpels give abundant Teſtimony. Now he begins to be more confirmed, and wondereth how he could ſo much overlook, ſo ſelf-evidencing a Truth and Duty ſo long: he converſeth further with the Records of the Apoſtles, whether their Doctrine and Practice did Harmonize, and tune in the ſame Concord with this new * Song, Pſalm, and Hymn of the true good old weekly ſeventh day Sabbath. His only remaining work now left, was to conſult the Apoſtles Writings, and therein he reads in plain legible Characters, that, as Chriſt's Cuſtom, Manner, or conſtant practiſed Uſage was; ſo alſo was † *Paul's* (the Expreſſion is one and the ſame in the *Greek*) to obſerve the ſeventh-day as the only weekly Sabbath day, and that, no other day in the whole week has both the Name and Nature of a weekly Sabbath-day given to it by the Holy Spirit, but only the ſeventh day: and that Obedience to theſe Laws of Chriſt is ſo often called for both * by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, as an evidence of Love to Chriſt, and of other Intereſt in him, as a Saviour; and that the new Teſtament Scripture was alſo cloſed up with Chriſt's Seal of Bleſſing to thoſe who doing theſe his Commandments, and of pronouncing a Sentence of Excommunication againſt any Man, who ſhould either add to, or take from this written Word, Will, and Law of Chriſt. The whole Scripture being thus profitable for this Doctrine and Duty of the weekly ſeventh day Sabbath, Chriſt ſate as one expecting an anſwer, readily, heartily, whereupon *Shem Acher* was not diſobedient to this heavenly Teaching by the Holy Spirit; but reſolves in the ſtrength and ſupplies of the ſame good Spirit, to ſet about the Practice of it; and this State of the Queſtion he ſends to his enquiring Brother, who alſo forthwith embraced the ſame Truth, and reduced it to Practice.

* Acts 17. 11.

† Exod. 25. 11, 16, 21, 22. 1 Kings 8. 9. Jam 2. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. * 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 1 Joh. 2. 4, 6. and 4. 17.

† Luk. 4. 16, 31. & 23. 56. & elſewhere.

* Pſ. 92. Title. Jer. 6. 16. & 17. 21, &c.

† Luke 4. 16. Acts 17. 2, 3. & 18. 4.

* Mat. 5, 6, 7. *chap.* Joh. 14. 15. Luk. 10. 25, 26, 27, 28. Rom. 4. 15. & 5. 13. & 13. 8, 9, 10. Jam. 2. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Heb. 5. 9. Rev. 12. 17. & 14. 12. & 22. 14, 15, 18, 19.

And now lo, a very formidable Sight ſtares him in the Face; for he ſaw ſuch an Army of Oppoſers, not only profane, but profeſſing, not only Foes, but Friends, all almoſt as one Man up in Arms againſt him, as ſoon as it ſhould take Air abroad, (for he was then the LORD's Priſoner) and be known, that it was his Principle and Practice. He alſo foreſaw, that tho this was no * Stumbling-block at all to him, neither any diſturbance to his own great Peace; yet many others would throw it as a Stone of Offence in their own and others ways, to the troubling the Minds of young Ones. In ſuch Multitudes, who promiſed ſo fairly, and came on ſo towardly, how many were likely to be much prejudiced againſt

† Pſ. 119. 165.

againſt him, and his former and after-Miniſtry? And what was moſt terrible of all, † how evil (tho injuſtly) many were likely to ſpeak againſt the Word and Ways of the LORD, and to blaſpheme *Jehovah*'s fearful, glorious and holy Name. Chriſt ſtill held him to former Terms, of bringing All to an whole Chriſt, and his whole Word; and ſuitably the good Spirit framed his Heart to this holy Reſolve, Duty is mine, the Iſſues and Succeſſes of things are the LORD's, and do belong to him.

† Acts 28. 22.

He privately obſevred the Seventh-day-Sabbath for ſome time, but with great Difficulties, and ſore Trials, and diſtreſſing Hardſhips in the Priſon: He imparts the LORD's Teachings of him to one, and then to another privately, who gave place in them to this Word-Truth and Law; and ſo unto ſome others, as they were capable of receiving it. And when four or five were hopefully gained over, he could hold no longer, and could not but ſpeak the Truths and Things of Chriſt in a more open Declaration, and publick Profeſſion; which being underſtood by ſome Miniſters and others, two Miniſters came to him in the Priſon, a little before the end of the ſixth day, with vehement earneſt importunate deſirings, beſeechings, and entreatings, and other arguings and charmings, that, he would forbear, tho but one day, the next day; which was the ſeventh day, to conſult and conſider of ſo weighty a matter, in ſo great a change for one week, Oh for one week longer! His Anſwer was quick, ſhort, full, and reſolved, in the Strength of the LORD, No, he would not put it off one day more, it was clear as the Light to him through the whole Scripture, and if he ſhould put away from him this Statute of *Jehovah*, tho but for one day, he knew not, but that the Holy Spirits quicknings, teachings and comfortings of him, might withdraw, and Convictions be darkened and deadned: From this time, tho Sufferings for Chriſt came on, yet Conſolations by Chriſt did abound, and the Scriptures did look with a clearer Face; ſuch is alſo the Experience of many others, who are upright-hearted walkers with Chriſt, and thorow followers of Chriſt in this way of his Command. The very next day, therefore, the ſeventh day, he celebrated as the weekly Sabbath day; openly witneſſing to it, and publickly declaring for it, from the Word: remembring, * that of his LORD Chriſt, *To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the World, that, I ſhould bear witneſs unto the Truth; every one that is of the Truth, heareth my Voice.* This was the ſaying of Chriſt himſelf a few hours before his Death. Since that, *Shem* never met with any Objection, that could ſhake or ſtagger him, but all wrought for his fuller Confirmation and Eſtabliſhment.

* Joh. 18. 37.

In the next place, his perfecting of Believers Baptiſm comes to be conſidered. Convictions about this alſo, did quickly ſpread in the Priſon, and from thence in other places. Having no convenient Accommodations for Dipping, under cloſe Confinement, he and two more took up Reſolutions to paſs under that Ordinance, when the LORD ſhould give his Priſoner Liberty: when he was ſet free, he and the other being at a time in *London*, two Brethren and one Siſter, being throughly ſatisfied in each other, took Boat and rowed down to *Batterſey* near *London*, and having diſcovered a convenient place of paſſing into the *Thames* River, intended there to ſubmit to this Appointment of their LORD the next Morning, if not prevented or hindred. There they kept Sabbath: before the ending of which day, ſomewhat providentially fell out by a difference in Judgment, which did put a ſtop to that whole Action for that time. Thus the LORD wiſely ordered, and graciouſly over-ruled this Affair for Good.

For he, having before been wrought off from all other whatſoever, to bring all entirely to an whole Chriſt, and to his whole Word, to Him and to it only, had the fairer and fuller opportunity to conſider before hand, how it might be done in the pureſt way, and to compare what he could meet with afterwards, if it might tend to his clearer Inlightning, or further Eſtabliſhment; that no one Mark of the Beaſt might be found upon him at Chriſt's coming to Glory.

Before, he therefore writes downright to the Caſe for matter of Fact, he will ſet down, what both before and ſince, he hath met with for an anſwer to this Queſtion, *Who ſhould be the Adminiſtrator, and who is fitteſt for it?*

There were divers of the Perſwaſion and Practice for Believers Baptiſm, ſome who had been his Fellow Priſoners, others of the ſame mind who gave him Chriſtian

stian Visits: but, his Spirit was not satisfied with any one of them. For, as for the Objection that has been made, that, a dead Man cannot bury himself, as if therefore, a Man could not baptize himself: Such arguing from some Similitudes are often mistaken and misapplyed, and recoil upon the Objecter. As in this Case, a grown Believer, if in any circumstanced Case he have a sufficient Call to baptize himself, yet is supposed to be not altogether dead, but, alive both in Nature and in Grace too: and a living Person may do such an Action, as may set out a dying, burial, and rising again. Let a Swallow speak in this Case; † History writes of this Bird, that, in the beginning of Autumn, it gets among the Canes or Reeds, where it sinks it self into the Waters, thus dying and burying it self, and at the beginning of the Spring it riseth up alive again. Being in *London*, and making enquiry there, his disatisfaction grew on: For, upon search made concerning, either a First-or-After-Administrator of this Ordinance, he was informed, either by printed Records, or by credible Witnesses, that the Administrator, was,

† See *Swan's Speculum Mundi*, p. 408.

Either, a Self Baptizer; such he knew not one lawfully authorized thereunto: (which yet) he will not totally condemn, especially, if a Call can be cleared up thereunto from the LORD. The Grounds and Reasons whereof are not fit to be brought in here, particularly, tho the discerning Reader may catch at Hints enough in what doth follow. There are *Hebrew* words, which do set out some such Washings, that are in two Conjugations, one of which Conjugations, *Hithpahel*, is always so, and the other Passive in *Niphal* is often, significantly * Reflective both Active and Passive upon a Man's own self: And here being some Typical Baptisms by the Institution of *Jehovah Ælohim* in the Old Testament; as also another Ordi-

* Such as *Rachatz*, and *Hithrachatz*, *Nibtal*, *Nishtaph*, *Shuttaph*. Heb. 9. 10. Lev. 15. 6, &c. Gen. 17. 10, &c. Rom. 4. 11. Col. 2. 1, 2.

In the *Greek* a Passive Verb, has often an Active signification. See for this *Pasor*'s Greek Sacred Grammer of the New Testament, *p.* 147, 148, 149. in many Scripture-Instances. Thus also in the *Latin* there are divers Verbs, which are called αὐτοπαθητικὰ, such as Passively do work Actively upon a Man's self. See *Danesius* his *Paralipomena*, p. 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83.

In the *Greek*, Words of the Middle Voice have often an Active signification, sometimes a Passive, now and then both. 1 *Cor.* 10. 2. ἐβαπτίσαντο 3 *Plur. aor.* 1 *Med.* They baptising (themselves) were baptized in the Cloud and in the Sea: Thus it was in the Types, which *Moses* sanctifiying by the Word and Prayer, the *Israelites* went in and under of themselves. Thus, *Act.* 22. 16. Βάπτισαι, *aor.* 1. *Imper. Mood.* baptizing (thy self) be thou baptized. *Shem Acher* will not say, there was nothing at all of this self-baptising by Christ's appointment upon himself; tho he resolves it into the Act of another, of Christ himself, upon him, he being the principal Baptizer of him.

Act. 22. 16. The deeper research that *Shem Acher* doth make into this Scripture, the more Note-worthyness doth he see in it. There are two Verbs in it, βάπτισαι, and ἀπόλουσαι, both of them relating to one and the same thing; that is, to Baptismal Washing, and they are both of them of the same middle Voice, of the same Imperative Mood, derived from the same first Aorist, of the same Number, of the same Gender, and of the same Person, and therefore both according to consenting Scripture, and in right Reason, should have the same signification, either Active, or Passive, or both Active and Passive; let it then and therefore be here minded and considered, that, whatever of Passive Significancy the latter of them may have in part, as the same Verb of the same middle Voice has in another Mood, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. which must be made up by the supply of some Preposition hereof κατὰ, saith *Piscator*, which is wanting, and must be put before the Accusative Case, ἀπόλουσαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου, wash thou off according to, or concerning of because for, or by reason of those Sins of thine; yet still at least mainly according to Grammar-Syntax and Propriety; it must be Active here; and such a Syntax is found in other Authors, particularly in *Homer*, *Iliad.* σ.

——— ὄφρα τάχιστα
Πάτροκλον λύσειαν ἀπὸ βρότου αἱματόεντα.

Ut quàm celerrime Patroclum abluerent a sanie sanguinolentâ. So that, the foregoing Verb also, βάπτισαι, is to be allowed the like Active meaning, in this place, Baptize thou, (thy self, and others, Christ putting baptising into *Paul*'s Commission, as one part, tho not the principal part of his Ministerial Office.) It is granted, that, the same Verb, referring to the same Baptism, in the Passive Voice, has a Passive Signification, *Act.* 9. 18. which Passive Voice is often Reflexive, that is Actively-Passive: However, in *Act.* 22. 16. all the words of the Verse do carry an Active Sence with them. God can make a Man, especially a Minister, an Active Administrator of an Ordinance, and upon himself, so it is in that other Ordinance of the Supper.

Thus, in the *Syriack*, the one Verb here in this place Active, the other Reciprocal and Reflexive. *Pegnil*, *Ithpegnal*, and *Ithpagnal*, are much after the Use and Form of the *Hebrew* Conjugation *Hithpahel*, which doth signify the Action of one upon himself, such an Action as is Reflected on its own Subject; for which cause the *Hebrew* Grammarians do generally affirm, that, this Conjugation doth want a Passive Form. *Conjugatio hæc parens est & proles*; and so, it is sometimes rendred, 2 Sam. 20. 10. *Cavet sibi.* Gen. 49. 1. *Congregate vos.* Isa. 52. 2. *Excute te.* Luk. 13. 24. *Cavete vobis.* Isa. 29. 9. *Cogitabundi estote.* Act. 9. 26. *Ad adjungendum se.* The *Hebrew* ת in *Daniel* and in *Ezra*, *Hith*, is in some of those Scriptures used for; א *Aith*, in the *Chaldee* and *Syriack*. If any after all this will alledg, that *Ananias* did baptize *Paul*; when they have first, if they can, make it clear, convincing, and evident, that he did so, let them bring forth such an *Ananias*, who has an expres immediate Call by a Voice from Christ out of Heaven, confirmed also by a Miracle wrought, that, he has such a Call and Commission thereunto, and *Shem* doth purpose to consider of it.

nance of the ſame Inſtitution, which has much the ſame Significancy with Baptiſm, even Circumciſion, which doth denote the mortification and putting off of the ſinful body of the Fleſh through the Circumciſion of Chriſt, being buried together with him in Baptiſm, the Sign and Seal whereof *Abraham* at the firſt paſſing into it, did both actively and paſſively adminiſter from the LORD upon himſelf, by the cutting quite away the Fleſh of the Foreskin; and Circumciſed the reſt of the Males in his Family: of which no more at preſent, till Controvertiſts leave their heats of Paſſion in contending and grow cool, and become Men of Underſtanding, of a more excellent Spirit.) But, he knew no ſuch Adminiſtrator to his ſatisfaction: For, if the Hiſtorian have not wronged ſome of the firſt ſo baptized in *Holland*, which is too uſual; one *John Smith*, a Member of *Henry Ainſworth*'s Church there, being excommunicated for ſome ſcandalous Offence, is reported to be one of the firſt, who baptized himſelf firſt, afterwards baptized others: and this Story brought no good report of ſuch an Adminiſtrator to *Shem Acher*.

Or two Men according to their Principle in their Judgment altogether unbaptized before, did baptize one another at the firſt, and afterwards did baptize others: and ſo were many of the Baptizings in *London*, reported originally to be in one if not in two Inſtances, where alſo no extraordinary Call from God thereunto, that ever he yet heard of, is pretended or pleaded.

Or elſe a private baptized Brother, no lawfully called Miniſter of Chriſt, nor rightly ordained Officer in a true Church, did baptize others: and ſo he underſtands were ſome of the choiceſt and beſt accounted Baptizings in the eſteem of many, of ſeveral of the baptized ones in *London*, carried on by one who always refuſed to be any Miniſter, or ordained Officer in the Church. He has been credibly informed by two yet alive in this City of *London*, who were Members of the firſt Church of Baptized Believers here, that their firſt Adminiſtrator was one who baptized himſelf, or elſe he and another baptized one another, and ſo gathered a Church; which was ſo oppoſed in Publick and in Private, that they were diſputed out of their Church-State and Conſtitution, out of their Call to Office; that not being able to juſtify their Principle and Practice by the Word, they were broken and ſcattered. This, together with that which goes immediately before, he was and is diſſatisfied about: becauſe, when he doth look into both the Typical Adminiſtrators in the Old Teſtament, and Antitypical ones in the New, ſtill they were in Both,* Commiſſioned, Ordained Miniſters and Officers appointed thereunto, either extraordinarily and immediately by the LORD thereunto; a Call from whom they could evidence by ſomewhat extraordinary to themſelves and others, that it was a ſpecial call from *Jehovah Ætohim:* ſuch an Adminiſtrator was *Noah* in the Ark; ſuch was *Moſes* under the Cloud and in the Red Sea; ſuch was *John* the *Baptiſt*, whoſe Baptiſm was from Heaven: (Let the Queſtion here be asked, and a ſound Anſwer well returned, Who baptized *John?* and whence was his Baptiſm?) Such were the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and other Miniſters and Officers ordained by them, or extraordinarily and immediately ſent forth, ſpecially gifted, graced, and called by *Chriſt* thereunto.

* 1 Pet. 3. 20, 21. Gen 6, 7, 8 chapters. 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. Iſa 40. 3, 4, 5. Mal. 3. 1. Mat. 3. Mark 1. Luke 3. Joh. 1 & 3 chapters. Mat. 21. 23-27. Joh. 3. 22.-26. & 4 1, 2. Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. Acts 8. 12, 26, 39.

Or elſe ſuch one or more, whom ſuch a company of Believers who had no lawfully called, rightly ordained Miniſter or Church-Officer amongſt them before, nor any ſuch Miniſter or Miniſters, Officer or Officers, to ordain or commiſſion ſuch, and yet do chuſe, and undertake to ordain by laying on of hands, they being all private Brethren, ſome private Brother or Brethren into the Miniſterial Office, and to ſend him or them forth to preach and to baptize: neither could this quiet his thoughts, or ſatisfy his ſpirit.

Or elſe ſome ſuch one, who however pretending to be called and ſent forth by Men, yet is not gifted, graced, and qualified according to the Requirements of Chriſt in his Word, for ſuch an honourable Office, and weighty Work: here alſo he was to ſeek, and could not ſo acquieſce.

Or otherwiſe, ſome ſuch who ſay they were at their firſt paſſing under this Ordinance, under an unavoidable neceſſity of doing ſomewhat this way beyond and beſides the ordinary-ſtated-Scripture-Rule and Way, which they hope the LORD did accept of, they giving to him the beſt they had according to their then-underſtanding: whereunto *Shem Acher* has only this to deſire of ſuch at preſent, that,

they

they see well unto it, their pleaded necessity be such an indispensible real urgent unavoidable necessity, as the holy Scriptures do warrant; and that they impose not that on him as a standing Rule to submit to, and to walk by, who is under other manner of Circumstances, and doth derive all his Satisfaction from an higher and purer Spring. And if that Necessity which they plead, have led them into a private Path, which is besides the ordinary beaten High-way of King Jesus in his Word, they have need to bring forth somewhat extraordinary, which may carry along with it true-and self-evidence.

What other way was there then yet left in this case, but only this one, to his satisfaction; He having been before so quite taken off from all Men, and all Creature-Authorities in these matters of Religion, and having given up himself wholly and entirely to Christ as his one and only LORD and Lawgiver, and to the Word of Christ as the one and only Rule of Faith, Worship and Life, and compleat Summary of all useful Arts and profitable Sciences; and having had so many sealing Experiences of Christ's more immediate and extraordinary Teachings, Callings, Healings of Him by his holy Spirit from his Father in his Word, and having passed before under a boring baptized with the holy Spirit, he with one more travelled from *London* to *Salisbury*, where, about the middle of the Day, in the broad River of that City, which runs with living water, he received his being baptized as by the Hand of Christ himself, in the Face of the Heavens, and so passed under Water, and baptized another: and further also received Imposition, † for stretching out by laying on of Hands as from this God Man from *Christ*, tho sitting in the higher Heaven in his glorified Humanity, *Christ* being the Author of this both Water and Spirit-Baptism, and stretching out and laying-on of Hands.

† Act. 10. 41. τοις προκεχειροτονημενοις. They were before-chosen and ordained of God to this Office of being Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, by his lifting up, stretching out, laying on of Hands: It was God's Hand who thus set them apart: (The compound Word is afterwards used for Ordination of Ministers to their Office, Acts 14 23.)

The Reader or Hearer of this *Narrative*, is desired to make a little stand in his thoughts, and here to ponder a while upon this weighty Considerable. In two grand parts of this *Historical Declaration*, the LORD has graciously given unto *Shem Acher* somewhat of * a Spirit of Discerning, whereby to discern Spirits for the present, and to foresee some of those Prophesied Methods which he will use, to set in order the Affairs of his House towards and in the latter-day-Glory, whereby *Shem* is enabled to trust Christ for Afterwards, or Afternesses, or what shall hereafter come to pass; The holy Spirit working and distributing what Gift he will to whom he will. These two Parts are his more than ordinary, both Call to the Ministerial Office and Work and way and manner of his Perfecting of Baptism. Both which being more immediately derived from ‖ Christ, that Head Officer of the Church he has the advantage and opportunity of holding forth before others, this, as one of the great Truths of the * present Age, the way and means of *Jehovah's* bringing his People † to measure all Administrations according to the Prophetical Pattern and promised Platform will be, by raising up, by gifting, graceing, calling, and sending forth some extraordinary Messenger, as from Heaven, to open, interpret, apply, and promote this revealed Mystery, relating to the approaching Glory of the latter days. Do not now over-hastily conclude, that, this is a rare Artifice, and a witty Invention, for *Shem* hereby to point out himself to be this special Prophet, by a new Name, which he assumes to himself; as if the foregoing Prophets did direct as with a Finger to him, as that *Elijah* the Prophet, or one in the Spirit of that *Elijah*, who was to come, and to restore all things, and so to take this glorious honour unto himself. For, he doth not cry up himself to be this very Messenger: tho *Jehovah Ælohim* may use and employ whom he pleaseth in this honourable Work, and *Shem* is somewhat prepared in Heart, by the Holy God Spirit, greatly to rejoice, and to give all the Glory to the LORD, might he live to see in his day and time, such a Gentile-Minister or Ministers, as an Angel or Angels from Heaven to come forth with the pure Word of God, altogether freed from all corrupt humane Mixtures whatsoever, either the very Original it self or an exact Copy word for word, and being clothed with the Spirit may preach it abroad with Power and Success, tho *Shem* as to this more eminent Honour, were laid aside, and might be priviledged with sitting at the Feet of such a one, to receive words as from Christ by such an extraordinary Messenger. But, this is that which he has further to say in this matter; that, he takes it for a special Favour freely bestowed upon him,

* 1 Cor. 2. 9. — 16. & 12. 10, 11.

‖ Eph. 1. 20, — 23 & 2. 19 — 22. & 4. 7, — 16.
* 2 Pet. 1. 12.
† Ezek. 43. 10, 11, 12. & *chap.* 44. *throughout*, Psal. 74. 9.

* Psa. 12. 6. Isa. 34. 16. Rev. 11. 19.

him, that, the LORD has revealed this inner Secret to him, and has so far made use of him as to assert and revive the Doctrine, and somewhat to prepare the way for the coming of *Jehovah* Christ in the conspicuous Appearance of his Personal Presence: before which time he will by Voice direct, and call and send some peculiar Officer or Officers of his, as * a publick Cryer, with this Royal Proclamation: That, this Christ as King of Kings, and LORD of Lords, is about to come to crown his Kingly Law, his written Word and revealed Will therein, as the one, and the only living abiding Rule, for all Churches and States to walk and to measure All by; let the Scriptures in the Margin be noted well. These Cryers and Proclaimers are publick Officers to give open notice of some State or Church-Affair, whereof the supream King, Priest, and Prophet, the LORD Jesus Christ, thinks good to advertize his Subjects, as by sound of trumpeting Voice; that, all and every one who are concerned may have the certain knowledg and timely warning thereof; It must be with such a vehement sound as is heard at a far distance, that, no one may pretend or plead Ignorance, when within hearing; with the Voice of one crying, calling by Name those he meets, and by expres Word, gathering a Convocation and Assembly, reading some part of the Book and Law and Will of God, preaching some Evangelical Word unto them, who give the hearing: For, this Voice, in the 6, 7, & 8, *ver.* of the 40*th chap.* of *Isaiah*, is distinct from the foregoing Voice, in the 3, & 4, *ver.* which was more fulfilled in and by the Ministry of † *John* the Baptist. *John* delivered his Message faithfully both as to his Ministerial and Baptismal Office, at the enterance of the New-Testament-Administration of Grace, when Christ was coming shortly after in his state of Humiliation. But, some other or others, will be called and sent forth about this latter, and toward the latter-day-Glory, a little before Christ's coming in the Clouds in his state of Exaltation, as the 9, 10, & 11, *ver.* of the formentioned *Chapter* will evidence, to a discerning considerate Reader, when the *Sioners* shall be Evangalized and gathered into Church-Flocks, unto a purer way than ever yet. When the *Jews* shall be in a preparedness for this great turn, and thereby made ready for the LORD, at that time, * as at the beginning of the New-Testament-Dispensation of Grace, some Ministers from among the *Jews* were employed in converting and baptizing of the *Gentiles*; so now in these later days, some of the *Gentile*-Ministers, may have the honour to be Instruments under Christ, of converting and baptizing of the *Jews*: And where can that People find a meet Administrator, if the LORD do not more immediately send them some Prophet, who can prove his Mission and Commission to be from on High? *They still requiring a Sign*, 1 Cor. 1. 22. For, as for those few of their Brethren in this day, who by outward Profession and Confession do own Christ to be the true *Messiah* already come in the Flesh, *Shem Acher* never yet met with any of them, (he has conferred with about five or six of such) who come forth with any thing extraordinary, visible mark and gift upon them, as to a being clothed with the Spirit. And that Baptism which they have received, at least some of them, if not all, has been from corrupt hands in a corrupt way: And *Shem* doth bear good will towards that People, praying for *Jerusalem*'s Peace, and for *Sion*'s Purity, seeking the good of her Sons and Daughters, and having experienced the Truth and Goodness of that Promise more ways than one, that, such shall prosper who love her. Besides, there may be divers of the *Gentiles*, who a little before God's thus favouring of *Sion*, may be brought more throughly into a perfecting of their Baptism, from among the Seekers, non-Church-Men, and several others, upon some of whose Spirits this doth lye with pressing weight; whither shall we go to meet with a lawfully-called-Ministry, and a lawfully-constituted-Church? where is there a well-warranted, heavenly attested-Administrator? *Shem* in this doth speak out some of the Thoughts of such dissatisfied ones, and he is so far ready with an answer, which he can give to those, who ask him a word concerning his Ministry and Baptism; Whence is thy Ministry and Baptism, and from whom thy Ministry and Baptism? as to the perfecting of both, it is from Heaven not from Earth, from Christ more immediately and not so from Men. Here, in the way, let it be remembred, that, the reviving of the Seventh-day-Sabbath, doth make way for the later-day-Glory-Conversions, and Ingatherings of the Outcasts of *Israel*, *Isa.* 56. 1,——8. And that, the Prophecies and Promises of building the old waste places, and of raising

up

* Isa. 40. 6, 7, 8, 9. & 42. 4, 16, 21. 1 Pet. 1. 23, 24, 25.

† Mal. 3. 1. Mat. 3. 3. Mar. 1. 2, 3. Luk. 3. 2,—5. Isa. 52. 7, 8. & 60. 5, 10, 16. & 61. 4, 5, 6, 9. & 62. 6. & 66. 12, 19, 20, 21.

* Song. 8. 8, 9, 10.

up the Foundations of many Generations, and of being called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer and Paths to Sabbatize is made over to such Revivers of the Seventh-day-Sabbath. This great useful Truth is therefore not only received in the Principle, but also closed with in the Practice, by *Shem Acher:* wherein he doth sweetly acquiesce to his own satisfaction, whilst others do dispute, preach and print, to defend and justify their various Calls to both, by Arguments mostly drawn from Men, tho running down to them in a very corrupt Channel; and if his LORD should say to his Servant *Shem*, as once to * *Daniel*, And thou, *Shem Acher*, *Go to the end, and thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot to the end of those days*; let it suffice thee, that *Jehovah* thy *Elohim* hath revealed this in thee, and done this for thee: but the larger pourings out of the Spirit, and more signal ownings are reserved for some others: yet even this is a special honour, and the Glory be to him.

* Chap. 12, v. 13. Isa. 58. 12, 13, 14. & 66. 21, 22, 23.

It is well worthy of an observable Remark in Scripture, that, besides the stated Ministry, the LORD has sent forth special Prophets and Apostles, upon urgent occasions: Some of these were of another Education and Profession, such as † *Amos*, who had been no Prophet, nor Prophets Son, but an Herdsman, and a Gatherer of Fruit. Thus also * the Apostles in Christ's time were some of them, poor plain Fishermen. *Jehovah* communicated Himself and his Will unto such in extraordinary Revelations, and confirmed their Office by miraculous attests from Heaven. In other Instances, he has dignified some with such special singular Employs, in a Ministry not common, † who were skilled in great variety of Arts and Sciences, especially in Scripture-Knowledges, in which latter he blessed their Studies and Labours, and encouraged their Diligence and Industry. So it was with *Moses*, *Daniel*, *Paul*, and others. * Prophets there have been in all the Ages of the Church, besides the standing Ministry. Before *Moses* there were, *Adam*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Joseph*. Afterwards, there were, *Moses*, *Joshuah*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Salomon*, *Nathan*, *Gad*, *Elijah*, *Elisha*, *Michajah*, *Esaias*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Amos*, *Obadiah*, *Jonah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, *Habakkuk*, *Zephaniah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, *Malachi*, *Zecharias* the Father of *John* the Baptist. In the New Testament, *Simeon*, *Agabus*; the good Apostles, by Name particularly, *Peter*, *John*, *Paul*, and others. † Apostles, and Prophets, are expressly mentioned as established Officers, set and appointed by Christ in his Church. This was not confined only to *Judea*; for, in other parts of the inhabited Earth, there was *Job*, *Eliphaz*, and others in the East, who were eminent Leaders of Congregated Societies, and there was a *Balaam* of *Syria*, *Mesopotamia*, who had a Prophetick Gift.

† Amos 1. 1. & 7. 14, 15. Acts 7. 42. & 15. 15.

* Mat. 4. 18, 19, 20.

† Acts 7. 22. Dan. 1. 4, 17. Acts 22. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 11. 1 Cor. 14. 18.

* Jer. 28. 8. Luke 1. 70. & 11. 50. Act. 3. 21.

† 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29. Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13. Act. 13. 1. 1 Cor. 14. *chap.*

To distinguish of Prophets, and of the several kinds of them, and of the distinct parts of their Office, is not my present work: let it suffice at this time to shew, that, the LORD has not been wanting to his Church and People, when he has been sought unto aright; as to his gifting, gracing, calling and sending extraordinary Officers (with a larger Commission than only to a small gathered handful of Disciples of Christ) when the ordinary ones have been corrupted or negligent, ignorant or unfaithful, or upon some other special Occasions. *Shem* in his own case, tho altogether unworthy of the least and lowest place of Service ministerial in Christ's House, yet for about these twenty years last past, having been Christ's Servant, to gather, feed, and rule a particular Church, or particular Churches, and to this day is so, he has declared against his being staked or teddered down to any one Place or People, he being Christ's Servant, at his Masters dispose, to do what publick work his LORD shall call him unto, whereso-ever, to whomsoever it be, having never as yet, either singly by himself, or jointly with others, laid on his Hands upon any one, as to an ordaining of him to the Ministerial Office.

This part of *Shem*'s Narrative should put some dissenting Brethren upon more serious considering, whether, they have not been very short of their Duty, who have cryed down, and run down all gathered Churches and Church-Ministers, (because of some Antichristian and Unscriptural Principles and Practices corruptly crept in) some for five, others for ten, some others for twenty, othersome for thirty years together, not seeing, or not believing, or not acknowledging, or not promoting, any extraordinary Ministry over gathered Curch, or Churches, set up

by Christ in the room thereof? And, O! who will give, that, this seasonable Word might fall and abide with kindly inworking Efficacy, in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power upon prepared Hearts, and unprejudiced Minds; both as to non-Church ones, and also as to the present Claimers of Ministry, by Office, whether National, Classical, Congregational, pleading for a right in their Tenure, whether by Succession, Authority from the People, or what else? That, one and another may yet bethink themselves of a more Scriptural way, for the informing, setling, satisfying, healing and uniting of Christians. As Scripture-History doth clear it up, that so it hath been, so Scripture-Prophecy and Scripture-Promise will fulfil and accomplish it, that, so it shall be in this latter-day-Glory, even a Prophetick, Apostolick, Evangelick, and otherways extraordinary Ministry, as well as a Pastoral, Teaching, ordinary Ministry, revived and advanced, continued and blessed, such special Administrators in Christ's House, by whom resort shall be to the Mouth of *Jehovah*, to ask Counsel at an Oracle of *Ælohim*; who has in all Ages of his Church, both before and since the Apostle's days, sent some special Messenger or Messengers to witness for Himself, and for the Truths of Christian Religion, against the Corruptions of the Times and Age wherein they lived; tho the number of such under many Providences has been but small, and the true Ministry and Churches have not so shined forth with visible Pomp, and outward Glory.

There may, if *Jehovah* our *Ælohim* and *Adonai*, do bring it forth by and in the Hand of his Providence, shortly come abroad a Scripture-Directory, concerning an House for the Sons of the Prophets, for the training up of such, whose Hearts the LORD shall make willing to study useful Arts and Sciences in the Book of Books, the Holy Scriptures of Truth, Inspired Gifts, and Acquired Gifts, where * both are sanctified, how useful are they when employed for the Edification of the Church and People of Christ? And, who of us can tell, but that the open declaring for both these by some *Gentile*-Christians, and Believers, and Ministers, who express their Faith in Prophetick Scriptures, that † there are near at hand some further more immediate Inspirings from the Holy Spirit with extraordinary Charisms, or edifying Gifts, and those of working of Miracles, and Gifts of Healings, and of Tongues particularly; (For, * the *Jews* do to this day require a Sign) and who withal do in the use of ordinary means wait upon the Holy Spirit for his inner Teachings, and for his Blessings of their unwearied Endeavours, and diligent Industry, of their serious cryings after Scripture-Knowledg in the Original Language, and giving their Voice for Understanding, seeking her as Silver, and searching for her as hid Treasures: For, (the *Greeks* do still seek after Wisdom, I say, who knows, but that) both *Jew* and *Gentile* may fall in love with this Art of Arts, and Science of Sciences, if *Jehovah* will in either, or in both these ways give Wisdom; out of whose Mouth Knowledg and Understanding: when Wisdom shall thus enter into Hearts, Oh! how pleasant will Knowledg be to the Soul? † As the LORD heretofore honoured some of the Christianized *Jews* to be under him his Apostles, for the converting of the *Gentiles*; so, in these later Days, he may honour, some of the Christianized *Gentiles* to be under him his Apostles, for the converting of the *Jews* and *Israelites*: * then shall the LORD and his new created Ones, be the mutual Glory of each other. Oh! how glorious a Day will that Day of such Glory be!

* 2 Tim. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17.
† 1 Sam. 10. 5,--13. 2 Kings 2. 3, 5, 7, 16. & 4. 38.
† Isa. 32. 15. & 44. 3, 4. Ezek. 39. 29. Joel 2. 28,--32. Ezek. 47. 1,--12. 1 Cor. 12, 13, 14. ch. 2 Cor. 3. 17. 18.
* 1 Cor. 1. 22, 24.
† Mar. 16. 15. Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. Gal. 2. 7, 8. Isa. 40. 9. & 52. 7, 8.
* Zech. 2. 5. Isa. 46. 13.

PAUL.

† *Paul* being thus put by Christ into the Ministerial Office, sets about the work wherein he laboured more abundantly than all the Apostles: his Travels up and down with the Gospel, as one Historian has computed them, were ten thousand two hundred and seventy Miles, from his first beginning, until his being Prisoner in *Rome*; and altho he might have required maintenance, * yet for the Gospel's sake he did forbear the demanding of it.

† His Sufferings were many and great; his being reproached was his sore Tryal; particularly that, * for his leading about of a Sister a Wife.

† He had care of all the Churches.

† Acts 9. 15,--20. & 26. 16,--20. 1 Cor. 15. 10.
* 2 Cor. 11. 9, 10, 11, 12. & 12. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. 1 Cor. 9. *throrow.*
† 2 Cor. 11. 28. *and so to the end.* & 4. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Gal. 6. 17. Rom. 3. 8. † 1 Cor. 9. 5. † 2 Cor. 11. 28.

* Where

*Where he made or found thorow Disciples of Christ in any City, Town, or elsewhere, he had and held actual Communion with them. * Act. 9. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, & 14. 22, 28. & 18. 23, 27. & 19. 1, 9. & 10. 1. 7. & 11. 4, 16. 1 Cor. 16. 10, 11, 12. 2 Cor. 8, 16, 17, 18. Deut. 18. 6, 7, 8. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. 38. & 11. 26.

SHEM ACHER.

Since Christ's more thorow Calling of *Shem Acher* to this Office and Work of the Ministry, the LORD has given him a willing and ready mind and heart, gladly to spend and be spent in his Service, and for Souls; and although his Travels have not been comparable for Miles and for Countries with *Paul*'s, yet he has had a Desire that way, if Christ had called, and enabled him thereunto; and he had this Honour put upon him, to be one of the first who set up open Separate Meetings in two or three Counties. And for his Diligence in Preaching, it is well known to many, of which he gave good Testimony through Grace (to the God of which Grace he ascribes all the Honour) especially for five years in a great Town in *Dorcetshire*, and afterwards, whilst above nine years the LORD's Prisoner, towards the latter end of which part of his Confinement in *Dorchester* he did preach sixteen times a week for some weeks, besides other occasional work; and since his coming near, or into the City of *London*, he has not been idle.

As for *filthy Lucre*, he has not greedily sought it. Whilst he received Tithe-Maintenance in a private Parish, which was near one Hundred pounds by the year, it was spent amongst them in Hospitality, in providing for the Poor, in buying of Bibles and such like, in setting the Poor on work; for he suffered no Beggar knowingly of all the Parishioners: and towards parting with them, he laid out about three hundred pounds in building a new House, which he left to such as should after succeed him to labour in the Word and Doctrine. This Estate he freely left, to answer a Call unto a Neighbour Town, where was much Work, and little Wages; For, the small Tithes belonging to the Vicarage were so inconsiderable, that when one whole years Profits were given to the King upon the Benevolence-Act, the Man who was to gather the Profits for the King, had at the years end laid out about five shillings more for decimation and in collecting than he had received: which he doth not mention to reflect it upon the Inhabitants of that Town, some whereof were not backward in contributing; but all that, and fourscore pounds Annuity of his own, setled upon him by his Father, was spent upon the place (except what was laid out in Books, and such like.) He also freely restored Thirty pounds, out of which himself took not one shilling, which was procured by some of the Town, and paid to an Assistant, as an Augmentation, which ran in *Shem Acher*'s other-Name. If any take himself to have been wronged or defrauded by him, let such prove the Charge, and he will make Restitution; *Numb.* 16. 15. 1 *Sam.* 12. 3, 4, 5. *Luke* 19. 8. 2 *Cor.* 7. 2. For seventeen years or thereabouts, altho he hath refused many pounds, yet he doth remember but one piece of Tithe that he received of any, which was brought to him by a Fellow-Prisoner, conscientiously, as she declared, which was a very little Pot of Honey, the Tenth-part of some Hive-Honey which she had in a little Garden of hers in the Country; which, to satisfie her, he did receive from her hands, but he presently gave it back to her again, and a shilling besides. This he doth mention, to wipe off that Slander of Self-seeking; who during his Ten-days-Tribulation, lived upon his Annuity, whilst a Prisoner: and since his coming to *London*, he has done the same. Tho his Judgment be, that Decimation is the Peoples Duty, about which he hath drawn up several Arguments in another Paper, reserved for such a season, when such Doctrine is like to have a readier reception.

What his Sufferings have been, are well known to some*, in nine full years close and hard Imprisonment, and the beginning of a tenth; besides those continued Reproaches, Slanders, and other Opposings which have assaulted him for about these last seventeen years more especially, both from declared Enemies, and pretended Friends: But, blessed be *Jehovah*, who has enabled him in any good measure † to endeavour to give no just offence, or occasion of falling in any thing, that the Ministry might not be blamed; but in all things has endeavoured to approve himself as a Minister of God, *in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Distresses, in Imprisonments, in Labours, in some Watchings, and Fastings; by Pureness, by Knowledge,* * Rev. 2. 10.

† 2 Cor. 6. 3. —10.

ledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by Love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the Armour of Righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by Honour and Dishonour, by evil report and good report: As a Deceiver, and yet true; as unknown to many, *and yet* well acknowledged by some; *as dying, and yet behold he lives; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.* He forbears to enlarge much more upon this, as not knowing how that will be received which is already mentioned: However, he doth † rejoice in his Sufferings for the LORD's People, and by way of Correspondence and Conformity to Christ, is filling up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in his Flesh, for his Bodies sake, which is the Church. * As it was with *Paul*, and as it was with Christ, so also with *Shem Acher*, a flood of Temptations and Persecutions brake in upon him when he thus passed under perfecting the Ordinance of Baptism, and into a more thorow discharge of his Ministerial Function.

† Col. 1. 24.

* Act. 9. *and in many other places of the Acts of the Apostles.* Mat 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. & 4. 1--17.

As *Paul* was, so also has *Shem Acher* been much slanderously misreported concerning his Authority and Power of leading about of a Sister, a Wife, in his travels. Historians do differ in their Judgment about *Paul*, whether he were actually married or not; *Eusebius Pamphilus* nameth *Clemens* and *Ignatius*, and some others there are who hold that he was married. That which doth perswade *Shem Acher* that *Paul* was married, besides somewhat else which he could produce that way, is † that expression of *Paul*, *I would that all Men were even as I my self*, which being interpreted of abstaining from Marriage altogether, were a very sinful wish in him: For, if simply and absolutely taken, if such a Will and Desire had obtained, all the Race of Mankind, and the whole Church of Christ, in two Generations had been utterly extinct. However the Case was with *Paul*, *Shem Acher* has been very unkindly and injuriously dealt withal about his Marriage with *Gnezri-jah*. When he (with some other Ministers) had the Honour to be so many years the LORD's Prisoner at *Dorchester*, it came upon and into the Heart of *Gnezri-jah*, from the time of his (and their) first Confinement, to be as a common Stewardess and Nurse, to make and bring in Provision of Food, and of other outward Necessaries for them, her Spirit and Soul being much drawn forth in Compassion towards the LORD's suffering Servants, in fellow-feeling of their Hardships, and with great longings after the daily enjoyment of Communion with Father, Son, and holy Spirit, by the LORD's Blessing upon his and others Ministerial Labours: at which time, tho she then had an aged Mother to maintain, she did pinch and straiten her self, in diet and other-ways, to serve and be helpful unto those Ministers; which was afterwards understood by *Shem Acher*, and considered by him. After some time the other Ministers having obtained their Liberty, *Shem Acher*'s Imprisonment was continued for several years; all which time this *Gnezri-jah* was a succourer of him, and did continue friendly & faithful to him in all his Temptations, and was very useful, not only to him, but also to many other of the Prisoners in divers cases. When he was set free, his Heart was engaged to preach the Gospel abroad; and having need of help, *Gnezri-jah* sometimes travelled with him; This being envied and maligned by some, to prevent, or remove any occasion of Scandal or offence, he declared unto some of the Church, that he was willing to take *Gnezri-jah* to him for a Wife, according to the Word, she being every way the fittest for him, she being a Sister in the same way of Church-Fellowship, and a Virgin modest and chast, many ways look'd upon as excelling almost all of her Sex in the whole Town of *Dorchester*, for Humility, Patience, Mortifiedness, Diligence, Faithfulness, Zeal, and such Commendablenesses as these, in the Judgment of all spiritual Discerners, who had any intimate acquaintance with her; and she having undergone so many Hardships and Difficulties for him, and after so many years experience of her fittedness for such a Yoke-fellowship, *Shem Acher* married her. When this was made known, the Tempter bestirred himself, and set some upon opening of their mouths both against him and her, that he had married one who had been a kind of Servant to him, one much beneath him for Birth, a poor Maid without a Portion; which was so odiously and unjustly aggravated and spread abroad by some, who should have been more friendly, (both he and she before then, and since, having been friendly unto them) that his Ministry was in a great measure rendred much useless and successless in those Parts; which pur-

† 1 Cor. 7. 7.

pose

pose of Marriage a little after compleated, together with the Advice of several of the Friends in Fellowship with him, to publish a Treatise in the Defence of the Cause of the *Seventh-Day-Sabbath*, was somewhat of the occasion both of his coming to, and continuing near and in the City of *London*. Thus must any thing a little colourable, serve for a Charge against *Shem Acher*, who has met with a passage in *Clarks* Lives, where he makes mention of a Commendable Act of one Minister of Christ, who having bin helped by a mean Handmaid, a Virgin, during his sore Imprisonment for the Gospel's sake, when he was set at Liberty, thought he could no other way so requite her, as by marrying of her. This is recorded to the praise of that Minister; but, if *Shem Acher* do the same, it must be look'd upon by many as a Scandal and Crime in him. As for a Portion, he prizeth Grace at a very low rate, who doth not really in a case of competition, esteem and prefer it above and beyond many Bags of Earthly Treasure: And altho *Shem Acher* might possibly have had several Thousands with another Woman, where there was not such a suitableness in other respects; yet it was a sweet sensible Evidence upon his Heart in his Conscience about that time, that being closely held to that † Scripture-term, he readily complied with it, and conformed to it, in the strength and supplies of the holy Spirit; *The Law of thy mouth, O Jehovah, is better unto me than Thousands of Gold and of Silver. Therefore I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea, above fine Gold.* *Shem Acher* having an Annuity of Fourscore pounds by the year, setled upon him during his Life, This provided Food convenient, and other outward Necessaries for him, and out of the rest he was ready to distribute out of the Decimation, and otherwise, to the Necessities of others proportionably as far as it would go; so that now, after twenty years or more enjoyment of that Annuity, he has not laid up one shilling out of that Means, if he die before *Gnezri-jah*, what he has to leave her is mostly his Study of Books, and some Houshold-stuff. They have not wanted Conveniencies since they came together, neither shall either of them want when they are parted asunder by Death; for they have Bonds by gracious Covenant under the Hand and Seal of the faithful God, to be cared and provided for: But, *Shem Acher* not having an Estate to settle any Jointure upon a Wife, if she survived, he never had any considerable Proffer made him, neither did ever meet with any pure Virgin so every way a meet help for him. The common corrupt practice amongst many of the Gentry, being to settle almost all their Estate upon their Eldest Son (which has brought a Curse upon, and has bin the Ruin of many Antient and Honorable, wealthy Families, the LORD in the way his Providence frowning upon such an unscriptural distribution, He allowing a * double portion of their Father's Goods to the First-born) whereas younger Brothers are often put off with some small Allowance to keep them alive. This *Shem Acher* doth mention, not at all out of discontent at his Allotment; for, he doth write as he hath long experienced, that his Annuity is the wisest and best Portion and Provision for him, it bringing in unto him a Competency, and discharging him from Worldly Cares, and Earthly Incumbrances; all his labour about this being once a Quarter to receive Twenty pounds, and to give an Acquittance: Only he brings in here this Testimony against the fore-mentioned common corrupt Practice. As for *Gnezri-jah*'s Family and Relations, An ancient Justice of Peace did declare, that her Grandfather was one of the First who appeared for a Reformation against the Superstitions and other Corruptions of the Times, to the endangering of his Liberty and Life; and that he, and a Kinsman of his, did lend one hundred pounds to Mr. *White* of *Dorchester* for his encouragement, who was one of the first and foremost and forwardest of all the *Puritane*-Ministers in the West, publickly by Preaching, and otherwise, to promote a Reformation. He dipped all his Children. This Mr. *Slado* her Grandfather had a considerable Estate in *England*, which he sold, and purchased somewhat in *Ireland*; he had a numerous Progeny, and they most of them have prospered well in this World, and divers of them fear the LORD: several of them are still living. Whilst he lived in the City of *Limerick* in *Ireland*, the Lecturers were entertained at his House; Two of his Daughters were there married to Ministers. One Mr. *Town*, who married *Gnezri-jah*'s Mother, *Shem Acher* has heard was a Doctor of Divinity, having Preferments in *Ireland* worth Two hundred pounds by the year,

† Psal. 119. 72, 127.

* Deut. 21. 17.

he kept seven or eight Servants and well bred up a fruitful Family: Her Father according to the Light of that day was zealous against Popery, often exposing his Life to danger in defence of the Protestant Religion; once the bloody Papists attempted to bury him alive: but, the LORD delivered him. In the *Irish* Rebellion about forty years ago, this Doctor with all his Family were persecuted; he left his Estate for the Cause of Christ; and after many wonderful deliverances in *Ireland* and at Sea, during that Rebellion, several of his Family came for *England*, where the LORD took care of them; but now they are scattered into several Countries: Yet notwithstanding this just Defence made as to Men, some do still go on with their defamings both of *Shem Acher* and of *Gnezri-jah* about this Matter, who leave their Cause with the righteous Judg, who knows, how they both for several years have much endeavoured to sweeten the Lives of others, and to promote Peace and Purity in the Churches; tho ill requited by many, whose unkindness have contributed much towards the breaking down of her Constitution, and the sore distressing of her Spirit; so that, it is a wonderful Power and Preservation, that, both her Husband and she are yet alive.

What careful Thoughts *Shem Acher* has had for the Churches of the Holy Separation according to his Capacity, Opportunity and Ability, is known to the searcher of Hearts, and there are some Friends who have been acquainted therewith; tho hitherto he has been but little encouraged, and cannot effect much: but, some Testimony thereof he has brought in this way, by a Treatise of his published in seventy seven, called, *All in One, &c.* by the Visits which he has given to Sabbath-Churches, and that Epistle of Love which he this Year sent to them for a Meeting in *London*, by Messengers, for the promoting of such good Work and great Ends, as were well worthy for the greatest Princes, and ablest Ministers, to countenance and prosecute: had it been entertained and improved according to its just due value; Which Epistle of Love was as followeth.

Shem Acher *a Servant and Minister of Jesus Christ, and the Friends in Church-Fellowship with him, in* London, *To all the Churches of Seventh-day-Sabbath-Observers, who keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith and the Testimony of Jesus; Sendeth a Christian Salutation of Brotherly Love: Mercy, Grace, Love, Peace, and Blessing be multiplyed to you from God our Father, and the* LORD *Jesus Christ.*

'WE give thanks to God and the Father of our LORD Jesus Christ, who has made known to you and to us his Holy Sabbath, and hath so far favoured 'and honoured us, as to use and own our open Confessing, and obedient Witnessing 'of this, and of any other Truth and Duty of the present Age, whereunto he hath 'called us forth in his Wisdom and Strength, who are but Foolish and Weak in our 'selves; and we earnestly desire you to help together, by Prayer with us, that, 'both you and we may walk worthy of God, who hath thus called us unto his 'Kingdom and Glory; and who has made King Jesus to be Preciousness and Ho'nour to us, and his Kingly Law to be Honourable and Glorious in our Esteem: 'Both the Old and New Testament towards the close of each, putting us upon a 'more particular and especial remembrance of Him and of his Law; and pronoun'cing those to be the Blessed Ones, who doing his Commandments, that, they may 'have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the 'City.

'There being divers exceeding great and precious Prophecies and Promises, rela'ting more peculiarly unto the Revivers and Observers of the weekly Seventh-day-'Sabbath, which shall go a little before the Coming and Appearing of our LORD 'Jesus Christ in Glory, when he will gather in the out-casts of *Israel*, and do his 'other latter-day-Glory-works; For, there shall be those of such Christian belie'ving Sabbath-keepers, who shall build all the old waste places, who shall raise up 'the Foundations from Generation to Generation, and who shall be called Menders 'of Breaches, Restorers of Paths to Sabbatize in, and, the time drawing on, Christ's 'Salvation being at hand to come, and his Righteousness to be revealed, so that,

we

'we ſhould look up, and liſt up our Heads, becauſe ſuch our Redemption draw-'eth near.

'We therefore propound this unto your ſerious Conſideration, dear Brethren, 'beloved in our LORD, that, by two or more Meſſengers from every ſuch Church 'in *England*, or by Letters and Meſſages from any of ſuch Churches, or of any par-'ticular Brethren in *Holland*, *New-England*, or elſewhere, we may meet, if our 'LORD will, once, or oftner upon weighty and urgent occaſions and neceſſities, 'every Year at *London*, or elſewhere, at ſuch times as ſhall be agreed on, to keep 'days of Faſting and of Thankſgiving together, by the Prayers of Faith, through 'the Mediation and Interceſſion of the great Apoſtle, and High Prieſt of our Pro-'feſſion, Jeſus Chriſt, to prevail with the Father for larger pourings out of his 'Spirit upon our ſelves, and upon others, for his ſpecial preſence of Grace with us, 'aſſiſting and bleſſing of us in all Church-Adminiſtrations, and at ſuch a general 'Meeting by Meſſengers; ſo, as that thereby there may be begotten a better Un-'derſtanding, and a more unanimous Accord among our ſelves, a more ſucceſsful 'carrying on of Truth, Love, Peace, and Holineſs in our Churches, a more exact 'bringing of all the Ordinances of Chriſt's New Spiritual Houſe to the Laws and 'Orders of the Prophetical Pattern according to Scripture-Inſtitution, and that, 'from cool conſiderate Conferences there may be given forth right ſtatings of any 'other Queſtions that may come before us, about which to give our advice mutually 'to one another, by the Rules of the Word of God, judging righteous Judgment 'according unto that, without any lording it one over another, but in all lowlineſs 'of Mind, in Humility and Meekneſs, being readily and thankfully made willing 'to receive further Scripture-Light from any, whom our LORD ſhall uſe and ho-'nour to hold it forth before us; and that, then and there we may conſult which 'way by a common ſtock to promote any good work, for the maintenance of any 'Church-Officers, for the training up of hopeful young, or more aged Men (found 'and ſtedfaſt in the Faith) in the Knowledg of the Original Tongue, and of other 'Scripture-Learning, and for the procuring of a more exact literal Tranſlation of 'the Old-and New-Teſtament into our Mother-Tongue, and for the more religi-'ous educating of Children, in Families and in Schools, and for the relieving of the 'Poor, and for ſuch other good Works; and to enquire, what may be further a 'Duty upon us, towards the two, and the ten Tribes of *Judah*, and of *Iſrael*, to 'help forward their Converſion, as alſo what the Spirit has to ſay more particular-'ly and eſpecially to our Churches, and to other Churches, in this great Provident-'tial-day, and ſuch like publick-ſpirited Inquiries: and all this for the promoting 'of the Honour of our LORD, and of his Word, Works, and Cauſe, the Purity 'and Peace of Churches and Salvation of Souls.

'Thus, through Grace, and Mercy, obtained from our LORD, we diſcover 'and declare our readineſs to joyn in with you, in what is the work of our Day and 'Generation, and ſo commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which 'is able to build you and us up, and to give us an Inheritance among all them who 'are Sanctified.

Shem Acher.

Now that *Shem Acher*'s Ends towards the latter-day-Glory might be promoted, and that *Shem* might proſecute ſo good a deſign in the uſe of all thoſe lawful means, which his Line could reach into, in his place, for the finiſhing of this part of his Teſtimony for Chriſt, for the Word of Chriſt, for the Law of his ten Words and the annexed Judicials, and for the Seventh-day-Sabbath more eſpecially; whilſt others were following of the King with Petition upon Petition, ſubſcribed with multitudes of Hands, from Cities, Towns, and Counties: By *Shem*'s direction, this following Addreſs was put into the Hands of the King.

Honoured

Honoured SIR,

THe Land doth tremble, it is broken, it ſhaketh: the right Way, and proper Method to heal its Breaches is plain and evident.

You have ſeen the Hand of the LORD ſtretched out againſt the Popiſh Plotters, in a continued Diſcovery for many Months of their bloody Deſign.

If the LORD Jeſus Chriſt, who is the King of Kings, would graciouſly give you a Heart for it, and then put it into your Heart, openly at the next Seſſion of Parliament, to declare, that, It is your full Purpoſe, and firm Reſolution, in the Strength and Supplies of the Almighty God, to ſet up the Laws of Chriſt in the Scriptures of Truth, as the one, and the only Rule of your Government, for which you have their own Authority in expreſs Words, The Law of God is the Law of the Land.

Then will your Name be tranſmitted to Poſterity in the Engliſh Chronicle, *with a Crown Royal upon it, Thoſe who honour Chriſt, he will honour.*

This from a mean Handmaid,

Elizabeth Hooker.

אלישבת הוקר אלי פלט

The Sabbath of my (Mighty) God make thou it Precious, O my God of Deliverance!

A like Addreſs was made by the ſame Advice and Hand, to the King to the ſame Effect, in anſwer to that loud awakening Call, by that ſignal Blazing Star, for the promoting of the ſame grand Deſign of exalting of Chriſt, and of the Word of Chriſt.

And a third, ſometime after to the preſent Mayor of *London*, for the like End.

As *Paul*'s manner was, accordingly *Shem Acher* in his place, finding ſome Diſciples of Chriſt, at his firſt coming to live near *London* to do work for his LORD and for Souls, they agreeing to deſire him thereunto, and expreſſing this deſire to him, that, ſeeing they were a few ſcattered Sheep without a Shepherd, not being fully then ſatisfied to join in Church Fellowſhip with any particular Church as ſo conſtituted, and ſo walking in *London*, they declaring their being ſatisfied in one another and in him, that, he would adminiſter the LORD's Supper unto them; which, after Conference with them, and divers of them having profited under his miniſterial Labours, and having been baptized by him, accordingly he did at *Bethgnal-Green* in the year ſeventy four, withal declaring both he and they, that, this was a providential Communion in all the Ordinances of Chriſt's new Spiritual Houſe towards the latter-day-Glory, ſo far, as for the preſent according to our Scripture-Light they can regularly come at them, and ſo long as the LORD ſhould continue them ſomewhat near together in their Dwellings: this was aſſented unto and agreed upon by thoſe baptized Believers, and Seventh-day-Sabbath-Obſervers. A little after this, ſome difference in Judgment ariſing amongſt them, which *Shem Acher* foreſaw, and told it unto ſome, a remnant of them, who were more of one Mind, agreed at a meeting in ſeventy five, to own the LORD Jeſus Chriſt to be the one and only LORD and Lawgiver to their Souls and Conſciences, and the Holy Scriptures of Truth, as the one and only Rule of Faith, Worſhip, and Life, according to which they were to judg of all their Caſes. Then did they paſs into a Church: For, at that meeting upon this Agreement, without any particular Church-Covenant about controverted Matter, they did firmly lay all their Church-bottoming and building upon this Rock and Foundation, even upon Chriſt and upon his Word.

A little before their thus passing into this Church State and Relation, the two Sabbath Churches in the City desired his Labours at sometimes with them in the use and exercise of his Gifts, which he consented to upon their importunity, the LORD assisting him and prospering of his Labours upon the Hearts of several, whose longings still encreased, to enjoy more of his Ministerial Labours, after that he had gathered some Disciples of Christ and was in a Church-way with them, and had a distinct Meeting-place in the same City, where he met with the Church, and others who gave their Attendance at that Assembly, where his service was accepted of the Saints; so that, they were mutually refreshed, whereby they had in much experience a savoury taste of the Spirits of one another, divers of the Brethren and Sisters of one of those two other Churches of Sabbath-keepers imparting some of their inmost Cases unto *Shem Acher*, who has here upon this occasion a weighty Case to propound.

As to the Matter of Fact, which is attested to be true by the whole Church, who knew what doth follow, with whom he doth walk; *Shem Acher* doth suppose, a Sister, of another Sabbath-Church in the same City, imparted this Case of her Soul unto him, reporting to him, that, for some years she had been much oppressed in Heart, distressed in Spirit, broken and distempered in her bodily Constitution, for want of that Spiritual Life and Liberty, Purity and Peace, Sweet and Satisfaction, which she enjoyed not where she sat before; but since she came under the Ministry of *Shem*, her communicated Experience is, that she has met with that Presence of the Holy good Spirit, and of Grace sealed upon her Heart here, to her Edification, Comfort, and Healing; whereupon she desired to be in full Communion with *Shem Acher*, and with the Friends in Church-Fellowship with him; he laying this Case in the several Circumstances of it to Heart (the particulars whereof he is not willing to insist upon, as being loth to exasperate the Spirits of any concerned) imparted it to the Friends in Gospel-Fellowship, who upon due consideration and serious deliberation, unanimously received her into Church-Communion, the healing comforting Effects whereof, were quickly felt in her Spirit, Soul, and Body too through Grace.

Upon this Case, as to the Matter of Right, ariseth this Question, Whether, under these Circumstances, either this Sister in so coming off from that former Church, or the Church with *Shem Acher* in so receiving of her, have sinned and transgressed the Laws and Rules of Christ?

That, neither she nor they are under Guilt in this Matter, *Shem Acher* and the Friends with him do give these following Scripture-Arguments and Reasons, bottomed upon Scripture-Grounds and Testimonies.

One Argument is drawn from the Principal Efficient Cause of a Church, who is *Jehovah Ælohim*. He it is * who createth, and maketh a Church. He calleth it, purchaseth it. He feeds it, he loves it as the Apple of his Eye; He walketh in the midst of it; He protecteth it; He doth all things for it; He dwelleth there; He formeth and frameth it; He is the Father of it: As the Father, and his Son, and Holy Spirit, is thus to his Church; so also is Christ the Mediator, the Redeemer of his Church, its Saviour, Deliverer, Purchaser, Buyer, Builder.

To this *Jehovah Ælohim* she has † given up her self, which is the Primary, Chief, and Special Relation, on which all higher Church-Communion and Fellowship is firmly and principally founded: it is to supersede and over-rule all secondary, meaner, commoner, and subservient Relations, on which all lower Brotherly and Sisterly Communion and Fellowship is more remotely, subordinately, and less principally founded. No after-inconsiderate-Obligation to any People can take away a former higher Obligation, whereby a right doth accrew to another, especially this other being the Supreamest over all.

The Argument runs thus.

If *Jehovah Ælohim* in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; if the LORD Jesus Christ, God-Man, who is the principal Efficient Cause of his Church, who createth it, and maketh it, &c. If he have this way evidently disposed of her, where she may most and best honour and enjoy him in all Church-Ordinances, and Church-Administrations, according to Word-Rule, she having thus given up her self to him, in a primary, chief and special Relation; then neither she nor we are under Guilt so far in this Matter.

* Psal. 100. 3. & 102. 18. & 149. 2. Isa. 43. 1, 7, 15, 21. & 44. 2, 21, 24. & 51. 13. & 54. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Psal. 47. 2. Acts 20. 28 Zech. 2. 8. Rev. 2. 1. Isa. 27 2, 3. Deut. 32. 28. Isa. 43. 1. & 63. 16. Act. 20. 21. Gal 1. 3. Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27, 29, 30. Col. 1. 24. Heb. 13. 20. Rev. 1. 5, 6, 17, 18, 19, 20. & 5. 9. & 14. 4. Prov. 9. 1. Mat. 16. 18, 19. Heb. 3. 3, 4, 6.

† 2 Cor. 8. 5.

But *Jehovah Ælohim*, in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the LORD Jesus Christ, God-Man, who is the Principal Efficient Cause of his Church, who createth it, and maketh it, *&c.* has this way evidently disposed of her, where she may most and best honour and enjoy him in all Church-Ordinances and Church-Administrations according to the Word-Rule, she having thus given up her self to him in a primary, chief and special Relation.

And Therefore, neither she nor they are under Guilt so far in this Matter.

Another drawn from the Instrumental Efficient Cause of the Church of God, which is * both, sound Doctrine, grounded firmly upon the Word, and faithfully Preached, by which the Church is born and propagated: and also, the Minister or Ministers of Christ, who preach this sound Doctrine, and do administer in the Church, who do feed the Church, who oversee it, who watch over it, who rule and discipline it, who pray for it, and such like.

They argue thus.

If this Sister have put her self in the same City under such sound Doctrine, grounded firmly upon the Word faithfully preached, and under such a Ministry, which is the instrumental Cause of a Church of Christ, where she has wholesome Food more proper and suited to her Cases, by which she is better nourished, is every way more advantaged, more profited, better cared and provided for, in all Spirituals, as to a Church-State-and-Relation, for Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Conversation, having all instituted Ordinances more fitted to her Spiritual State, Frame, Acting, and Appetite, her Soul-cases more directly spoken unto, there being more of a sweet Spiritual Accord in Principles, and other ways between her Spirit and the present Church with whom she walketh, which she could not for several years so enjoy in the other Society; then neither she nor they are under Guilt so far in this Matter?

But, this Sister, *&c.*

Therefore.

* 1 Pet. 1. 23, 24, 26. Col. 1. 2,--7. Acts 2. 41,--47 & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 1, 7. & 8. 4, 12. & 9. 31. & 11. 21, 24. & 13 49. & 14. 1. & 16. 5. & 17. 4, 12, 34. & 18. 4, 8. & 19. 19, 20. & 20. 28. Mat. 24. 45. Joh. 21. 15, 16, 17. Act. 20 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2. 1 Tim. 3. 1. Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Pet. 5, 1, --5.

Another is drawn from the Material Cause.

* The LORD Jesus Christ is the supream Head of his Church, the material Cause of the Church, of the same Nature, partaker of the same Flesh and Blood with all the living Members of his Church, made like him in all, except Sin: the same holy Spirit, who is in Christ, resideth in the Church, and in all and every of the regenerated Members thereof, who by this Spirit are united to Christ, animated ensouled by this Spirit: from this Christ doth flow all Spiritual Life and Motion to his Church: he is by far more excellent than the Church; he has the Empire and Government over the Church; he gives Laws to the Church; he is the Saviour of it; he doth acknowledg it, and is acknowledged by it, he is indissolubly united to it by the strongest, closest Bond; no other besides him is Head of the Church; he is the Husband of it, he fitly joyns the Members of it together into one Body; he doth gift the Church, and its Officers; he is always present with it, having all Authority and Power in Heaven and on Earth given to him for these holy good Purposes.

* Eph 1. 22. & 4. 15, 16. & 5. 23. Col. 1. 18. & 2. 19. Heb. 2. 15, 16, 17, 18 & 4. 4. 15, 16. Rom. 8, 9, 11, 14. Eph. 4. 3, 4, 5, 6. Song of Songs throughout. Isa. 33. 22. Eph. 5. 23. Joh. 10. 14. Heb. 3 6. & 10. 21. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 4. 4, 15, 16. & ver. 11, 12, 13. Mat. 11. 20. & 28. 18, 19, 20.

It is here thus argued.

If Christ in all this have so framed, inclined and led this Sister, and accordingly she have in all this thus submitted unto Christ in the fittest and best way, where she according to her raised expectation has received more of the Holy Spirit, and of influences from Christ, as a living Member under this Church, as the only Head, and as the Supream Material Cause of the Church; then neither she nor they are under Guilt so far in this Matter.

But, Christ in all this, *&c.*

Therefore.

This was drawn from the Material Cause of the Church Supream.

A further Argument shall be drawn † from the inferior Material Cause of a Church of Christ, which are the Elect, Believers, and Saints, who are the Members and the Body of Christ, and have mutual care of and for one another, Communion with one

† 1 Cor. 6. 15. & 12. 27. Eph. 1. 22, 23. & 4. 4, 12. & 5. 23. 30. Col. 1. 18, 24. & 2. 19. Joh. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 2. *and the Titles of* Paul's *other Epistles to the Churches.* Heb. 12. 23. Eph. 4. 16.

one another, and are jointly helpful to each other, and do faithfully and friendlily discharge the Gospel-Duties of Church-Fellowship mutually towards one another, such as mutual considering of one another, *&c.*

It is here, thus argued.

If this Sister have joined her self there in Church-Fellowship with them amongst those, whom she charitably hopes may be such living Fellow-Members in Christ with her, more and better suited to her Spirit in such a Church-way of Spiritual Incorporation, where she has more freedom and better agreement in her inner Man, more Spiritual Communion, more really expressed and acted helpfulness as to Spirituals, more enjoyment of the Gospel-Duties of Church-Fellowship mutually towards one another, than in that Society where she was before, and all this as the Inferior Material Cause of the Church; then neither she nor they, *&c.*

But this Sister, *&c.*

Therefore.

Another is drawn from the Formal Cause of a Church of Christ.

The Formal Cause, or Form, or * that which doth give a spirited Life, Being and Motion, is the uniting Spirit of the LORD enlivening the Church-Body, and that Union of Believers in the Spirit with Christ as the Head, and with one another as Fellow-Members of the same Mystical Body.

* Eph. 4. 3, 4. Acts 2.41,-47. & 4.32. & 9.31. 1 Cor. 12. 12, 13, 27. & 10 17. & 1. 10, 11. Phil. 2. 1,--5. Eph. 1. 21, 22, 23. & 3. 17. & 2. 19. Rom. 8. 9. 1 Joh. 4. 13. Col. 1. 18. & 2. 19. Eph. 5. 32.

The Argument thus presenteth it self to be considered.

If the Spirit of this Sister in Experience according to the Word, both were before Admission, and hath been and still is since her Admission amongst such more knit and united by the Holy Spirit, in Holy Spiritual Union to Christ and to these Fellow-Members, where she has more of spirited Life, Being, and Motion, than when amongst those with whom she walked in Society withal before, which was broken off and taken away from her as to the quickness and comfort of it, as to the former Church, in whose fellowship she could not any longer to any good satisfaction continue, and where she had little or no expectation after much proof and long waiting, to have it otherwise as the Case was circumstanced, she being now made more sensible, that her Spirit doth more close with, and is more one in Union and Communion with the Spirit of that Church in this Church-way of Ordinances, with whom she is joined, and all this as the Formal Cause, or Form, or that which doth give a Spirited Life, Being and Motion to a Church; then neither she, nor they, *&c.*

But, the Spirit of this Sister, *&c.*

And therefore.

From the Final Cause a strong Argument may be drawn, and its right words are forcible.

† The Final Cause, or the great End or Ends, for which *Jehovah Ælohim* has formed his Church, and for which Christ gave and delivered up himself, in respect of him is his Glory, the Honour of his Name in the World, that it may be as a Throne of his Glory; the purging and cleansing of his Church and People; their enjoyment of Spiritual Priviledges and Benefits purchased by the Blood of Christ, their nourishing, growing more up into, and further perfecting in Christ; their receiving more of all Spiritual Supplies from Christ, their mutual Edification, being built up more and more in their most holy Faith, their possessing of signed, sealed, witnessed, delivered free gracious Grants from the Father through his Son, by his Spirit in the word of his Truth of Grace, and at the last their everlasting Happiness, in a clear sight and full enjoyment of the Heavenly Glory in his Eternal Kingdom, in the better Country: In the mean time, the giving and receiving of Spiritual Alms, Bread and Wine, to hungry thirsting Souls, as necessary Provision in their Voyage, whilst here in the way.

† Isa. 43. 7, 21. Jer. 13 11. & 14. 21, Eph. 5. 26, 27. & 4. 11, 12, 13, 15, 16. 1 Cor. 12. 13. & 10. 16, 17. Luke 12. 32. 1 Cor. 14. 3, 26, 40. & 10. 16, 17. 2 Cor. 13. 10.

The Argument is thus formed.

If this Sister, after long Experience, and much waiting, and earnest Praying, could not attain the forementioned Ends of Church-Fellowship in that way wherein she walked before; whereas since she passed into Church Communion with others, the LORD has graciously given her to enjoy in growing Measures much of these desired

desired Ends, and some good Beginnings, as she hopes, of the filling up of these in the Heavenly Country, where she longeth and waiteth, prayeth and prepareth to be with her LORD in the most pure and Glorious Church; then neither she nor they, *&c.*

But, this Sister, after long Experience, *&c.*

Therefore.

Two other Arguments may be drawn from the just Right and due Property of this Sister.

* 1 Cor. 7. 21, 22, 23. Deut. 18. 6, 7, 8.

* The Gifts and Graces and Experiences of all the Faithful Ministers of Christ in the same City especially, being one with Christ and his Word, in the Faith and Order of the Gospel, are a part of every Believers Portion there, which they may use as their own, especially when actually, really more to their Edification, as Providence doth give opportunity.

From hence it is thus argued.

If this Sister in this have acted, but as her just Right and due Property is, to enjoy this part of her Spiritual Portion, and if they have but done her Right in granting her what is her own, as due unto her; then neither she nor they, *&c.*

But this Sister in this has acted, *&c.*

Thererfore.

Also from her lawful Liberty.

This Sister reserved a Liberty, if she found in Experience, that her continuing there were not to her Satisfaction and Edification, that, then it should be free to joyn her self to some other Church of the same Faith and Order, in the main, of Baptized Believers, and Seventh-day-Sabbath-Observers, where she might be more to her Soul-profiting: and † they are to render unto all their Dues, to owe no Man any thing: they may not withhold good from them to whom it is due, (from the owners thereof) when it is in the power of their hand to do it, they may not say to their Neighbour, Go, and come again, and to Morrow they will give, when they have it by them; none may lord it over her, or exercise Dominion over her Faith, but should be helpers of her Joy: the righteous and just *Jehovah* loveth Righteousness, or Justice; he would not have any to make the Hearts of such righteous Ones sad, whom he hath not made sad.

† Rom. 13. 7, 8. Prov. 3. 27, 28. Psal. 11. 7. Isa. 51. 22, 23. 1 Pet. 5. 3. 1 Cor. 7. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Ezek. 13. 22.

The Argument is thus framed.

If this Sister in thus coming off from the former Church, joyning of her self to others, have but claimed and taken what was her lawful just Liberty, and upon being admitted by others, have found in Experience, that, she has not gone backward, but pressed forward towards the approaching Glory of the latter-day; then, neither she nor they, *&c.*

But this Sister in thus, *&c.*

And therefore.

Further Arguments may be drawn from common and special Bonds both of Humanity and Christianity.

In general, and in common they being with her Fellow-Christian Disciples, and not only so, but also in particular and in special, as they are Fellow-Baptized Believers and Sabbath Keepers, * they, standing related to this Sister in the Duties and Priviledges of Church-Fellowship and Communion, and having by the Evangelical Ministry amongst them done in this but such a compassionate charitable Office, as to take a sickly Sheep into such a Pasture, where Christ has given her both Food and Rest, who, as her Case was circumstanced, was Consumptive before, and in danger to be made a Prey of.

* 1 Cor. 12. 13, 27. Joh. 10 9, 19, 11, 16, 28. & 21. 15, 16, 17. Ezek. 34. throughout. Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.

Hence they thus argue.

If they stood related in the Duties and Priviledges of Church-Fellowship and Communion to this Sister, not only by general common Bonds, as being with her Fellow Christian Disciples, but also in particular and special, as they are Fellow-Baptized Believers and Sabbath Keepers, and have by the Evangelical Ministry amongst them done in this but such a compassionate charitable Office, as to take a

weak

weak sickly Sheep into such Pasture, where Christ has given her both Food and Rest; who as her Case was circumstanced, was Consumptive before, and in danger to be made a Prey of, knowing no other Remedy, as a means, for her Spiritual Relief under her distressing Case; Then neither she nor they, *&c.*

But, we stood related, *&c.*

Therefore.

Further, under this Head of Argument.

It is warrantable by the Laws of concreated both Nature and Grace, to take in by Coadunation that, which doth run to them by * Spiritual Connaturality. Every thing hasteneth to join with its Connatural: and what is Connatural doth readily receive it, and this by the Laws and Rules both of the first and new Creation by sympathetical Coadunation; like will to like. Thus in Minerals, if divers Metals be melted together, they joyn each to that of its own kind; and Beasts and Birds will flock together amongst those of their own kind; if you put Chymical Spirits and Oyl into one and the same Glass, tho by violence they may be jumbled and shaken into a commixture, yet let the Glass be set down steady awhile, and the Spirits will run to the Spirits, and the Oyl to the Oyl, and they will be distinct, and quickly tell the observing Eye, with whom each of them will be in Society. It is one Property of the Church of Christ, that it is Coadunated into an Oneness and Sameness in Gospel-Duties and Church-Priviledges.

* Phil 2.19,20, 21. Acts 9.26, 27, 28. Judg. 20.11. 1 Sam. 18,1. 1 Chron. 12.17. Col 2.2, 19. Rom. 12. 16. 2 Chron. 11,13,14,15,16. Act. 19.8, 9. Song of Songs throughout. Eph. 4 4,5,6.

From whence it is thus argued:

If this Sister, and They in This, have acted by the Laws and Rules of Concreated both Nature and Grace, She coming in, and They taking in by Coadunation, there being a mutual Motion of Consent for Church-Union and Communion between Her and Them by Spiritual Connaturality in the great and main things of Experimented Christianity; Then neither She nor They, &c.

But, this Sister, &c.

Therefore, &c.

Take one Argument more drawn from Scripture-Precepts and Precedents: * Christ and his Apostles, and other ordained Ministers, did, according to Scripture-Rules, so receive Disciples, Believers, and Saints into Church-fellowship. Where *Paul* made or found thorow-Disciples of Christ, walking in all the Commandments of the LORD blameless, in any City, or Town, or elsewhere, there he held actual Providential Communion with them, as is proved in the Margent, pag. 21, concerning *Paul.* In one and the same City, where were many preaching Ministers, and several Congregations, the believing baptized Disciples being supernumerary, too many for only one place of assembling for instituted Worship, all of them at one and the same time; † yet so many of them as were such, were as one Church, even where were several Congregated Churches, and were not so bound up only to hear in one of these Congregations, not only those Ministers who preached more commonly in some one of these Congregations; but, it was their liberty and priviledge to hear in other Congregations of the same City, and other Ministers of Christ, teaching in the same City, where it was evidently more for their Edification. All the believing baptized Disciples of Christ in *Jerusalem*, are called *Peter*'s and *John*'s, and the rest of the Apostles own Company, their proper ones, tho there were other of the seventy Disciples, Teachers there also. Besides the Temple there were several Synagogues in *Jerusalem*, which were necessary for Meeting-places, the number of Christian Disciples being so multiplied. The Apostles taught in other Houses as well as in the Temple, in the Synagogues in *Jerusalem*, there being a necessity of many Meeting-places, when there were so many myriads, so many ten thousands of Believers, as the *Greek* doth expresly affirm, at *Jerusalem*, tho the *English* Translation doth not so render it, *Act.* 21.17, 20. And the more General Appellation of the *Temple* doth sometimes in some places include the *Synagogues*; so was the *Tabernacle* called. There were *Synagogues* in *Damascus.* There were *Churches* in *Judea*, and *Galilee*, and *Samaria.* There were several Preachers, Prophets, Teachers in *Antioch* a City of *Syria*, too many to be confined only to one Congregation, whom those of the Church in

* Rom 14.1. & 15.5,6,7. Joh. 22, 34, 35. & 10.16. Mat. 5, 6, 7, 13, 23, 25. chapters.

† Acts 2.41,--47. & 4. 4, 32. & 5. 11, 14. & 6.1,--7. & 7. 38. & 8. 1, 3. & 11. 22, 26. & 12. 1, 5. & 14. 26, 27. & 15. 2, 3, 4, 22, 23, 25, 27. *Compare also* Acts 2. 42, 43, 44. & 4. 23. & 5. 42. & 6. 1, 2, 5, 7, 9. & 8. 1, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14. & 9. 2, 20, 22, 31. & 11. 19,--27. & 12. 25. Acts 5. 42. & 20. 20. 1 Sam. 1. 9. & 3. 3. 2 Sam. 22. 7. Psal. 18. 6. & 68. 29. & 5. 7. & 28. 2. Acts 13.,2,5. & 14. 26, 27, 28. & 15. 21, 34, 35, 41. 1 Cor. 1. 2. & Rom. 16. 1. *compared.*

that City might hear as they most could profit; especially was it thus in *Jerusalem*. There were Synagogues at *Salamis*, a City in *Cyprus*. In every City of *Judea* they had their Synagogues, where was Reading and Preaching every Sabbath Day. There were Churches in *Syria* and in *Cilicia*. At *Corinth* there was a Church, and another at *Cencrea*, which belonged to *Corinth*. And this Church at *Corinth*, the Believers and Saints in Church-fellowship there are highly commended by *Paul*, for first giving up of themselves to the LORD (Christ) to be wholly his, in all things to be ruled by his Will and Law, and then, under Him, unto his faithful Ministers, so far as these did guide them by the Scripture-Rule according to Christ's Will therein: not only those Ministers of Christ who were more particularly related to some Church there, not only to *Apollos*, or some one or two more, but also to *Paul*, *Cephas*, *Barnabas*, *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Sylvanus*, or any other such providentially teaching there, they all doing the same work, and being Workers together therein: 1 *Cor.* 1. 12. & 3. 4, —9, 22. & 16. 10, 11, 12. & 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. & 5. 18, 19, 20. & 8. 16, —24. & 12. 12, 18. 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. There were more Ministers than one at *Corinth*, is clear from 1 *Cor.* 14. 23—32.

This, with more of the like Collections from Scripture, might be improved to great and good uses, when the Churches shall be in a spirit and frame for it.

At present they thus argue from hence: If *Shem Acher* and those with him, have received into Church-fellowship this Sister according to the forementioned Precepts and Precedents by Scripture-Warrants and Rules: Then neither She nor They, &c.

But, *Shem Acher*, and those with him, &c.

Therefore.

Thus have they made it appear by many solid Arguments, that they have not done, without great Causes and weighty Reasons, what they have done in the Case of this Sister. If any will be returning an Answer, it is desired and expected, that he would, according to what he sees here before him, first, set down the Scriptures, and then argue from those Scriptures.

They have brought in their Testimony for their LORD in this matter, He having given Authority to his Officers, for the Edification of his Churches and People, and not for their Destruction. They can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth. They love the Truth and Peace; they pursue Holiness, and would have their All to be done in Love, in that Love which is of God, and is brotherly and unfeigned. 2 *Cor.* 10. 8, 10. & 13. 8, 11. *Rom.* 15. 4,—7. *Zech.* 8. 19. *Heb.* 12. 14. 1 *Cor.* 16. 14.

PAUL.

* 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. Act. 26. 9, 10, 11. 1 Tim. 14, 15, 16, 17. Act. 9. & chap. 22. & chap. 26. Eph. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19. 1 Cor. 15. 8, 9, 10. *Consider well the History of the Acts of the Apostles, and the several Epistles of* Paul. Eph. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 11. & 12. chap. throughout. 2 Cor. 4. 1, 2. & 11. 12. Heb. 13. 18. 1 Cor. 15. 10. & 2 Cor. 12. 11, 12. Phile. v. 9. Phil. 3. 7, —21. 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7, 8.

* He had found good Evidences and Assurances of his happy State in saving sanctifying Grace. Altho in the days of his Unregeneracy he had been one of the Prime of Sinners, yet he lived to be one of the most eminent Exalters of free Grace, and most serviceable Instruments in Christ's hand, of any meer Man that ever lived; yet he in great Humility acknowledged himself less than the least of all Saints. O what a Name of Honour has he in Scripture-Records for his Doings and Sufferings for Christ? How much did he commend himself to every Man's Conscience in the sight of God? having this to be his rejoycing, the Testimony of his own Conscience, that, in Simplicity and Sincerity according to God, not in fleshly Wisdom, but in the Grace of God, he had had his Conversation in the World; being confident that he had a good Conscience, behaving himself well in all things. Well nigh about one third part of the New Testament is an Historical Narration concerning him, who tho he were so singularly eminent, and so growingly excelling in edifying Gifts, and in sanctifying Graces, and in extraordinary usefulness, even to old Age, to the very last, yet still forgetting those things that were behind, he reached forth unto those things that were before, pressing toward the Mark, for the Price of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus, having his Citizenship in Heaven; calling upon others to be Followers together of him, and to mark them who walk so, as they had him for an ensample, so far as he followed Christ, who

when

when he had fought a good Fight, finished his Course, and kept the Faith, passed triumphingly into Glory, being well assured, that, there was laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness, which the LORD the righteous Judg would give him at that day.

SHEM ACHER.

If towards the close of this Narrative any serious Enquirer, do desire to be satisfied concerning his Spiritual State; that no trouble may remain upon their Heart and Mind to hinder their profiting under his Ministry, the God of all Mercy, of all Grace, and of all Consolation has treasured up much in the Heart of *Shem Acher*, as matter of self-emptying and of Soul-humbling, yet withal of exalting of *Jehovah Ælohim* in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of advancing of Christ that All-wonderful one, God-Man: How unsearchably rich has this Grace, how admirably free has this Love been!

A Spiritual Discerner may gather much together by way of Evidence, out of the foregoing History of *Shem Acher*'s Life; one more eminent Passage whereof he would here revive in the Memory, because it has been one of the most eminent excelling Experiences of his whole Life, when his more thorow Conversion, by way of Spiritual Espousals, had such clear full satisfactory self-Evidence in it, as shines in his inner Man to this very hour, altho he had somewhat of it before. It is that shining Manifestation of those glorious Appearances of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the Heavenly Glory to *Shem Acher*'s Spirit, and of the LORD Jesus Christ as to his glorified Humanity, and the seat of it in the North above this blew visible Expanse, the opening of which Mystery may hold forth a Scripture-Light for the guiding of others, in their turning to the LORD, covenanting with him, and being espousingly united to him; for, it is, where seriously, throughly, and discerningly performed, one of the most solemn Actions in this World. As to a Covenanting with the LORD.

On the part of *Jehovah*. *

He sets his Faces before the convinced Sinner, who is now about to turn unto him.

He shews his readiness to pass into a Covenant-State and Relation with the returning Sinner.

Jehovah makes gracious Offers and precious Promises to such a returning Soul upon certain equal Terms, if it voluntarily (by his enabling and making willing thereunto) choose, and approvingly agree to, and readily close with those Terms.

He declares to such a Soul, that, it will be accursed, if it either refuse this Offer, or be falsehearted in its profession of Assent and Consent to these Terms.

He raiseth up and establisheth the Soul in some great expectation of receiving some special Good from *Jehovah*.

He shews himself forward to take such a Soul to himself, and to acknowledg such a one for one of his own peculiar People.

Jehovah engageth to be a God to such a Soul, if the returning Sinner give (in the supplies of the Holy Spirit) unfeigned Assent and Consent to all this so equal a Proposal, so every way for the covenanting Convert's Good.

He refers this returning Sinner, as to what *Jehovah* hath spoken, to his own Conscience for all this.

He confirms all these Offers and Promises to such a Soul by Oath.

Jehovah sits upon the Throne of his Grace, expecting an answer from this returning Sinner unto all this.

* Deut. 29.10. –14. & 30. 1, 2, 3. & 26.16, –19. Ps. 110. 3.

On the returning Sinners part.

This Soul sets it self before the Faces of *Jehovah*.

Upon serious deliberation, this returning Sinner is, by a day of Christ's Power upon it, made willingness, voluntarily to choose, and readily to like all the Terms of this Covenant of Grace.

This

This Soul passeth over actually into Covenant with *Jehovah*, and acknowledgeth him for its God.

This covenanting Soul submits to the justness of the threatning Curse, if the Soul be false-hearted, unfaithful in this Covenant.

The Soul is made sensible of *Jehovah*'s great Kindness, in making so free and gracious an Offer to it.

The covenanting Convert, doth present, give, and resign up his whole Self, Body, Soul, and Spirit, to this *Jehovah* to be wholly one of his, altogether and only at his Command, Will and Disposal.

The Soul believingly particularly applyeth this *Jehovah* to it self, as its own God in Covenant.

This Soul takes this *Jehovah* at his own Saying, being well persuaded, that, his Word so confirmed by his Promise and Oath, which are two immutable things, is true concerning all this, and upon this Word bottometh its Faith, and adventureth it Self, its Salvation, its All.

This covenanting Convert expecteth, that, *Jehovah* will make good all this, and fulfil and accomplish it in a Scripture-way, as his Word is.

The Soul is duly humbled under all this, going out of it self, off from all meer Creatures, and away from all dependance on any Duty it doth perform, to receive all its Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption from the Father freely, through Christ purchasingly, by the Holy Spirit inworkingly, giving all the Glory to *Jehovah-Ælohim*, resolving in his Strength, to know, keep and do, all the Words of this Covenant.

Somewhat of the manner of Spiritual Espousing at that remarkable time of inward Vision and Revelation, was thus.

Shem Acher, having a distinct view, by an Eye of Faith, in a more than ordinary way and manner, of the Father as the Father, of the Son as the Son, of the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit; did orderly pass, being helped from on High thereunto, and assisted therein, into a distinct mutualness of such solemn Contract between him and every one of these, which took up some time in his particular application severally to each from that Scripture, Isa. 54. 5. *Thy Husbands thy Maker: Jehovah Ælohim* so commending Himself, his Beauty, his Goodness, his every-way Amiableness and Lovelineſs, to *Shem Acher*'s choise, so utterly altogehter unworthy of such an unexpressible Favour in such a way of condescending Grace, drawing *Shem*'s Heart with such Bands of a Man, and such Cords of Love, inworking and outcalling such answerable Affections from him, towards each of them, and so knitting and uniting his very Heart and Soul to every one, as his Tongue cannot utter the whole of; he had rather leave the rest to the admiring Meditations of experienced Believers, who have in any good growing measures felt and enjoyed the same, than to expose any more of this at present to publick view. Only so it was, that *Jehovah* himself approved of what then passed between him and *Shem*, the sealing witness whereof was never wholly withdrawn since that time to this day, but still abides and lives there; tho he have been exercised with many humbling Providences, buffeting Temptations, boistrous Corruptions, blasphemous Suggestions, and distressing Cases since that signal Honour: The LORD hath since that Contract all along provided for *Shem* as for one wedded to him, and the espousing knot between them is declared indissoluble.

He doth not by this say, that the LORD was never graciously at work upon his Heart before; for he has brought in some other Testimonies for that, in some choice Experiences before this more eminent Favour and Honour, tho for several years in his younger time, the work were more from a Spirit of Bondage to Fear, as has also been expressed; one time more especially, when upon Fasting and Prayer, as he remembers, being under the Terrors of the LORD, he was summoned to appear before the Bar of God's Justice, to answer unto such Charges as were to be brought in against him, which were so many, so heinous, and criminal, that seeing himself, before the actual passing of the Sentence, condemned in the Court of the transgressed Law, in the Court of Divine Justice, and in the Court of his own guilty Conscience, he was close and home put unto it; Whether, he would submit

to the Sentence of the Judg were it for everlasting Condemnation by an Act of Justice, or for Eternal Salvation by an Act of Grace and Mercy, and whether he would acknowledg God to be just and righteous therein, if he should condemn him by an irreversible Sentence to be deservedly miserable.

Those, whoever were thus exercised, cannot but apprehend, what Horrours and Fears did now surprize and overwhelm *Shem Acher*: yet was it not long before the Holy Spirit framed him to such a submission and acknowledgment, which with Tears and broken Language he expressed and declared, and so threw himself all along with his Mouth in the Dust, as at the Feet of his Judg, not knowing at first, whether he should be struck dead, and damned upon the place or not: But, the LORD quickly after pronouncing how justly *Shem* had deserved to be cursed for ever, yet that Christ was made a Curse for him, and presently an Act of Grace in the free and full forgiveness of his many and great Sins was drawn up, signed, sealed, and delivered, received, applyed, and witnessed to his Soul: the Crown of all be on the Head of the free Forgiver! since which signal Pardon, *Shem* has not, that he remembers, had almost any considerable fears of Hell at all, to speak of, at any time upon him.

Thus there is * Conversion after Conversion. In all which Relation concerning his Conversion, Covenanting, Espousing to, and with *Jehovah Ælohim*, he doth not impose his Experiences as a Rule for others to measure the Truth and Soundness of their turning to the LORD by, in all and every of the parts, degrees, and Circumstances of them; provided that their Conversion be indeed true and serious, sound and sincere according to Word-warrant and approbation: it highly concerns them to see well to this, and duly to examine themselves by Scripture-Rules about it, that they do not deceive themselves.

* Mat. 18.1,2,3,4. Luke 22. 31,32.

If further Evidence be called for, he can add these comprehensive Particulars.

That, † there is no one Sin in the Seed of it, in corrupt Nature, or in the Thought of it, at least in the Imagination, which ever any of the Sons or Daughters of *Adam*, on Earth, or in Hell, for the kind of it, either thought, spake, or did, recorded in the Word or communicated to him by the voluntary Confession of others, which he has not had both some sight of, some sense of, and some hatred of: yea, some ways worse than ever he yet read or heard of, by inventing of such evil things in the Phancy, as he doth not know any other Man or Woman in the World did ever contrive. This Universal, both Original and Natural Corruption, which has so defiled his whole Man in all and every of the parts of it, being so direct a Contrariety and Enmity to and against that Holiness and Righteousness which is in God, and in his Law, having been *Shem*'s Burden both Night and Day for many a long Year. * Tho he doth thank God through Christ Jesus his LORD, that the Perfect and All-sufficient Sanctification of Christ's Humane Nature, and the through and perfect Obedience performed by Christ in the whole Course of his Life whilst conversant amongst Men here on Earth, is imputed unto him for Justification in the presence of God, and has been so imputed, he by Faith putting on the LORD Jesus Christ, and being cloathed with his Righteousness; whereby his Sins have been forgiven, cast behind *Jehovah*'s Back into the bottom of the Sea, passed by, forgotten and blotted out, and not imputed; *Jehovah* Christ being his Righteousness, in which he doth stand righteous before the Judgment Seat of God.

† Eccles. 9 3. Gen. 6.5. Rom. 1 30. Mat. 15. 18,19,20. Mark 7.21,22,23.

* Rom. 7.17,--25. & 8. 2,3. & 13. 14. & 4. throughout. 2 Cor 5.19,21. Dan. 9. 24. Rom. 3.19,20,--26, Isa. 45.24. Rev. 19. 8. Luke 7.47. 1 Joh. 1. 9. Col. 2.13. Isa. 38.17. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Psal. 103.12. Isa. 43. 25. Psal. 32.1,5. Rom. 1. 17. Isa. 45. 25. Jer. 23.6.

That, he knows not any one Saint, either on Earth or in Heaven, so far as we have Scripture-Records of these in the Word, who experienced, either edifying Gift, or sanctifying Grace, or priviledged Enjoyment, or useful Serviceableness, and such like, which he doth not heartily approve of, and which more or less he hath not both holily with submission † aspired after, and some ways so far as he is concerned in his Place and Calling had some workings about it; and by improving of Mystical Membership applied as his own.

† 2 Cor. 5. 9. φιλοτιμούμεθα, *cum Ambitione contendimus*, we ambitiously endeavour.

That, he knows nothing, either in a whole Christ, or in the whole Word of Christ, of Holiness or of Righteousness, which he would not have an universal growing Knowledg of, and Conformity and Obedience to, in all things in his whole Man.

That, all these have been carried on for several years by a very sharp Contest, and continued Conflict within, more especially against the universal Corruption of his Nature, which has very slily and sometimes fiercely assaulted him; yet so, as that tho there have been many a Foil and Fall in some particular Combates, yet, that the Issue of the Fights have been Victories, Spoils, and Triumphings.

This humble ingenuous Confession *Shem Acher* doth freely make of those secret Sins, which no Man alive can so charge upon him: which is one part of his Evidence, whereby he doth conform to Christ's Mind * in his Word where it is required, where Promises are made to it, where Examples are recorded of it, and which will give him the more boldness in the Day of Judgment before the LORD the righteous Judg, and before Angels and Men. For these Considerations have brought his Spirit to this self-shaming acknowledgment, so that he can die with the more Peace of God in his Conscience, when the Hour shall come.

That, the LORD hath graciously in some ascending degree manifested to him, and revealed in him, that inward Mystery of a † New-Creature-Spirit in his regenerate State in Christ, as distinct by a New Creation from his own natural constitutive Essential parts as a Man, and from the Holy Spirit, who was, is the begetter of it, by the immortal Seed of the Word, and as contrary to, that Evil Spirit Satan, and to the Spirit of the World, it being of that same Spirit, which Christ as Mediatoral Head received without measure; and is one of the highest Advances of a Believer in a growing and withal an humble frame to partake of the Divine Nature.

That, * the Steps and Degrees of this Spiritual Growth have been more and more out of corrupt self, off from idolized Creatures, away from Duty-dependances, into more and more of a State of Grace, through and by that into a Life of and in Christ, and through and by him into a Distinctness and Orderliness of Communion with the Father as the Father, with the Son as the Son, and with the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit, and thence into a more raised Communion with *Jehovah* himself.

That, all through † this Historical Narrative, he blesseth *Jehovah Ælohim*, that still more or less he has been pressing onward, and going forward, as the growing-Light of his Age has been, not declining nor going backward in Principle, excepting somewhat in that void space of his time at the University, but getting upward to come at the top of all, having many a contrivement and endeavour to promote the greatest and the best Ends, particularly those that do relate to the latter-day-Glory; which in all the kinds and degrees thereof, he knows not to have been so in the Heart and Mind of the most eminent Believer and excelling Saint, alive on this Earth.

It having been for many years, through Grace and Mercy obtained from his LORD, *Shem Acher*'s State, Frame, and Acting, to come up in some answering growing proportionedness to all the requirements of Christ's Mind and Will in the whole Scriptures, that he might be a Man after Christ's own Heart, who enabled thereunto by the Holy Spirit, might fulfil all Christ's Wills, *Acts* 13. 22. and might so serve his own Generation by the Will of God, before he fall on sleep, *ver.* 36. standing perfect and compleat, or, filled up, in all the Will of God, *Col.* 4. 12. *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. and so may be able in some good measure to answer these Questions of his LORD and Judg, What dost thou more? *Mat.* 5. 47, 48. what excelling, what exceeding thing, wherein goest thou beyond others? What Grace, what Grace, what Grace (which the *English* Version doth translate three times, what Thank) hast thou? *Luke* 6. 32, 33, 34. that, according to that Promise, (For so it should be rendred in the Future Tense, ye shall therefore be Perfect, Ἔσεσθε, 2 *pl. future* 1 *Indic. ab* εἰμὶ, *sum*) *Mat.* 5. 48. he may be still at perfecting work, *as his Father who is in Heaven is perfect*; tho still he carry upon is Spirit and Heart a living Sence of somewhat wanting as to higher degrees, yet he would in every thing be and do somewhat that doth excel, *Psal.* 16. 3.

If any after all this will say, That they have now one Charge more against *Shem Acher* than they had before, in that he has so compared himself with *Paul*, thereby ministring to the Pride and Selfishness of his own Heart: Such should know and consider;

That,

* Ezek. 43. 10, 11. Lev 5.5,6. & 22. 1, 2,3,7. Prov. 28.13. 1 Joh. 1. 9,10. Psal. 32.1,--5. 1 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Joh. 3. 21. & 4.17. Heb.4. 16.

† 1 Thess. 5.23. Joh. 3.3,4,5,6, 7,8. Ezek. 36. 26,27. 1 Cor. 2 10, --16. 2 Cor. 5.17. Gal. 5.16,17, 25. Rom.8. 1, 27. Eph. 2 10. & 4.4,5,6.15,16, 22,23,24. 2 Pet. 1 3.4.

* 1 Cor. 15.10. Gal. 2. 20. 2 Tim. 2. 1. 1 Joh. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 13. 14.

† Gal. 1. 18. ἱστορῆσαι Πέτρον. *Paul* went to *Jerusalem* to visit *Peter*, so to visit him as that, he might know from him, or declare to him the History of Persons and of things, especially of Church Affairs. Thus has *Shem Acher* given the History of his Life, of his Call to the Ministry, of his perfecting of Baptism, of his Conversion, of his Evidences of Grace, of his Church-Affairs: and somewhat of an History of some others who have opposed him.

That, as he must after a while give an account of his writing of this Narrative, and of his Aims and Ends in so writing, so also must they of their Judgings and Condemnings of Christ's Servant: who has for many years been exercised with very humbling Providences and Cases to keep him lowly after the LORD's signal honourings of him.

As for his running Parallel with *Paul*, the Title-Page in propounding of *Paul* for an example, doth expressly give the Preheminence unto *Paul*, and no farther use the comparing, than as it doth run Parallel: There is no difference between the highest and the lowest Saint, but what the Grace of God has made: and an † higher and incomparabler Example than that of *Paul* should every Believer, especially every Minister, be conformed unto, even that of the LORD Jesus Christ himself.

† 1 Cor. 11. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 Joh. 2. 6. & 4. 17.

Had there not been so many years Attempts and Endeavours by some to blast the Call of *Shem Acher*, and thereby to hinder the Success of his Ministry, to the troubling the Minds and discouraging the Hearts, of several, who were hopefully coming on towards Christ in his ways, he had intended to have lodged this Historical Declaration within him, and when he had died away into Glory, to have made report of it to Heavenly Fellow-Citizens, which then and there would have been more cleared up in divers Circumstances of it, and in many more Particulars, than are here mentioned: Duty and Sin do stand sometimes within an Hairs Breadth one by another; That may look like a Sin, which is a Duty, and like a Duty which is a Sin: If others will count and censure this as Vain-glory in him, it is known to many, that he has been necessitated unto it. The Searcher of Hearts doth know, that *Shem Acher* hath been made willing, that the Glory of these Holy Experiences, and signal Honours should be ascribed in every part, and in the whole of it, unto *Jehovah Ælohim*, whose rich Grace and free Love has been in all this, unsearchably Rich, and exceedingly Abundant.

This is that * Word of the Day in the Day thereof, which was brought upon his Spirit to declare unto others; it being self-evident unto him, that the LORD has put a Beauty upon this, in thus timing of it in its own proper season; the whole whereof is now delivered over unto the Holy Spirit, to work this History and the choise experiences therein, upon their Hearts, into whose Hands, before whose Eyes, or unto whose Ears, it may come, as is good in his Sight; and all is submitted to † Scripture-Counsel-Number-Measure-and-Weight, to Word-Rule-Tryal-Judgment-and-Determination; By a Lover and Admirer of Christ, and of his Word and Works.

* Lev. 23. 37. 1 King. 8. 59. 2 Chron. 8. 14. Ezra. 3. 4. Eccles. 3. 11.

† Deut. 1. 16, 17. & 16. 18. Joh. 7. 24.

* *Shem Acher.*

* Col. 4. 18. 1 Cor 16. 21. 2 Thess. 3. 17.

POSTSCRIPT.

Shem Acher, having been by a private Letter to a near and dear Friend advertised, that, he is at least by the strong jealousy of one or more suspected, if not down-right charged, (and this before the Historical Declaration is Printed and Published) to be guilty of two Evils, the one of striving for Supremacy, the other of not walking according to Gospel-Order, and both these in reference to that part of the Narrative, about receiving of a Member in some Cases out of one Church in the same City into another Church of the same City, in the main of the same Gospel-Faith and Order: *Shem* therefore to prevent, or else remedy and remove, any misapprehensions that may fill the Hearts and Minds of any Reader, as also any stumbling-Blocks at which some unwary walkers may be offended, doth openly and freely declare; that as to the first of these, which is striving for Supremacy, (tho the Seed of this, as of every other Evil, is in his Heart, as in the Heart of every Son and Daughter of *Adam*, as our Nature is corrupted: which he doth apprehend was one of the first Sins, both of the Apostate Angels, and of Fallen *Adam*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. *Gen.* 3. 5, 22. For, both the one and the other affected a Superiority, and Self-Exaltation above and beyond that, which was their Primitive concreated Excellency) he doth now upon this occasion publish to all those into whose Hands this Paper shall come, and by whom it shall be read or heard, that it has been quite con-

contrary to his both Principle and Practice for many years, he has preached openly againſt this often in Aſſemblies for inſtituted Worſhip, as Multitudes of Hearers can witneſs; he has Printed againſt it: his conſtant free publick Teſtimony brought in againſt it, in whomſoever he diſcovered it, whether Pope or Prelate, Conformiſt or Non-Conformiſt, under all the changes of Governments and Conſtitutions, doth plead for him in this Matter; and for this Teſtimony it is, as one great occaſion which has been taken and uſed by Men of the old Hatred and deep Enmity againſt the Purity of the Chriſtian Religion, and the Power of Practical Chriſtianity, who ſet up their own Human Authorities, Inventions, Inſtitutions, Edicts, and Impoſitions above and contrary to the Authority of Chriſt, and of his Wills and Laws of his written Word; for this I ſay it is, that *Shem Acher* has ſuffered ſo many years Impriſonment, and has been divers other ways perſecuted: and it is much upon the ſame account of oppoſing of that Church-dividing deſign and attempt in ſome of the Holy Separation, that he has ſo appeared in the forementioned Caſe, which he has referred unto *Jehovah* to talk with them about, *Third Epiſt. of John ver.* 8, 9, 10. Let this be well noted and duly conſidered, and rightly applyed. If any will be ſo far contentious, as to print the Caſe for Matter of Fact under other Circumſtances, than the Truth is, whereby to give an odious miſrepreſentation of the Caſe unto others, I am not minded to keep up any quarrel about that: but if there be any need of further reply unto that, my purpoſe is to leave it unto ſome Friend or Friends in Fellowſhip, who have kept punctual and faithful Records of what has paſſed. That Cauſe which *Shem* in this Paper is an Advocate for, is the Matter of Right upon ſuch a Suppoſition as this printed Paper doth expreſs.

Concerning the ſecond of theſe, which is, Not-walking according to Goſpel-Order, *Shem Acher* has this to ſay for his Defence, in the Main, both as to his Judging and Acting, That his ſtudying of the Scriptures has been at times a long while about this Church-Order according to Goſpel-Rule, and that many a Prayer he hath put up to *Jehovah Ælohim* for Light and Direction concerning it, that his Zeal for Chriſt's Fathers Houſe was that, which did much put him forward upon acting in this Caſe as he has; and that conſidering the ſmallneſs and fewneſs of the Number of thoſe who both in the Country, and ſince in the City, in both, for now towards twenty years laſt paſt, he doth not know any one particular Church, that doth bring all Church-Caſes more to Scripture-Rule, as our growing meaſures of Knowledg herein are, and which hath more exerciſed Church-Diſcipline than that Society of Baptized Sabbatarians do with whom he has walked, and doth walk. If after this Apology, *Shem* ſhall be yet further charged with Self-Partiality in his own Cauſe, he reſorts for this Parallel to *Paul*'s Example, 1 *Cor.* 4. 3,4,5,6. *With me it is a very ſmall thing* the leaſt, *that I ſhould be judged of you, or of an Human Judgment*, or a Man's day, *yea, neither do I judg my ſelf; For I am conſcious of nothing to my ſelf, yet am I not thereby juſtified: but he who judgeth me is the* LORD. *Therefore judg not before the time, until the* LORD *ſhall be come, who ſhall alſo bring to Light the hidden things of Darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of Hearts: and then ſhall every one have praiſe of God. Learn in us not to ſavour above that which hath been written* (in the Word of Chriſt,) Tho *Shem* have much to plead his Cauſe in the Court of Men, yet the righteous *Jehovah* can find out much for which to condemn him in the Court of Heaven: Bleſſed be *Jehovah Ælohim*, who has found out a way, and has led *Shem* into it, whereby to juſtify *Shem* from that in all his Caſes, wherein he doth condemn himſelf.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 2. for *Guillam*, read *Guillim*. P. 3. f. Αυτοπάτερ, r. Αυτοπάτης. P. 10. l. 13. f. *James* 5, r. *Jam.* 5, 14, 15, 16. P. 10. l. 21. f. *John* 3. 25, 26, 27. in the Margin, r. *Mark* 5. 25, —34. P. 10. l. 27, r. *John* 3. 25, 26, 27. let this be put into the Margin, with an Aſterick *, before A Man, &c. P. 10. l. laſt but two, ſtrike out, 1 *Sam.* 23. and put in *Jer.* 23. 21, 22, 32. P. 11. l. 46. f. *Acts* 19. 18. in the Margin, r. *Acts* 9. 18.